猫絵十兵衛

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎぞうし

御伽草紙

一

永尾まる
NAGAO MARU

EDO NEKOE
JUBEI
OTOGIZOSHI

猫絵十兵衛

ねこえじゅうべえ おとぎそうし

～御伽草紙～

十

BY

NAGAO MARU

永尾まる NAGAO MARU

EDO NEKOE JUBEI OTOGIZOSHI

①

SIGN: MOUSE DETERRING CAT PAINTINGS

CAT PAINTER JUBEI

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SIGN: CAT PAINTING

SIGN: TIGER

LET ME DRAW YOU A PAINTING! ♪
うらん
ANYBODY NEED A PAINTING ?
LET ME DRAW YOU A CAT PAINTING !
SIGN: MOUSE DETERRING CAT PAINTINGS
CAT PAINTER JUBEI
WON'T YOU DRAW ME ONE?
PEEK ひょこっ
HEY, MISTER CAT PAINTER !
DRIVE YOUR MICE AWAY WITH A CAT PAINTING !
BANNER: MEALS

EDO NEKOE JUBEI OTOGIZOSHI

猫絵十兵衛 御伽草紙

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし

CHAPTER I CAT VISIT

MISTER,
CAN I PAINT IT ON THIS DOOR?
YES, PLEASE DO!
THIS ONE USED TO CATCH A LOT OF MICE TOO IN THE OLD DAYS.
MEOW
BUT BECAUSE OF AGE, ALL HE DOES NOWADAYS IS SLEEP.
THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM NOW, IT REALLY BOTHERS ME.
IS IT REALLY TRUE THAT PAINTINGS OF CATS REALLY DRIVE MICE AWAY?
YES, OF COURSE!
BECAUSE AFTER ALL, THE CATS I PAINT HOLD THE MAJESTIC POWER OF THE DEWA CAT SHRINE! NOTHING ESCAPES THEIR GAZE, PROTECTING AGAINST PESTS LIKE MICE AND FLEAS.
ALL THE MICE WILL BE GONE BEFORE YOU KNOW!
WELL THEN, I'LL GET MYSELF TO THE TASK NOW. COULD YOU ALLOW ME SOME TIME ALONE, SO I CAN CONCENTRATE BETTER?
ALL RIGHT. I'LL GO PREPARE SOME TEA THEN.
CLANG
LET'S SEE...
I'M IMPRESSED YOU CAN KEEP A STRAIGHT FACE WHILE TELLING PEOPLE SUCH LIES, JUBEI.

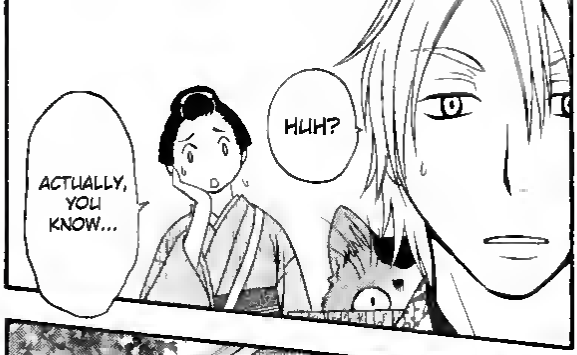
AS LONG AS IT WORKS, WHO CARES? BLURTING OUT SOME HONORABLE NAMES PUTS PEOPLE AT EASE. EVEN IF THEY ARE ALL LIES.
...AND YOU SHOULDN'T TALK HERE, MR. NEKO-MATA*.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, MR. HUMAN.

*MYTHICAL TWO-TAILED CAT

EXHALE
SNIFF
LOOKING GOOD, THOSE EYES.
YOU'RE WEL-COME.
YOUR WORK ISN'T BAD EITHER, AS LONG AS YOU'RE DRAWING ANIMALS.
GLARE
I'M SORRY I'M BAD AT DRAWING PEOPLE, ALL RIGHT!!?
MEO-HOHO-HO!
MR. CAT PAINT-ER?
I JUST HEARD A STR-ANGE VOICE JUST NOW
OH! YEAH, I JUST FINISHED IT RIGHT NOW!
RUSTLE
I SEE, THANK YOU FOR YOUR WORK.
HERE'S SOME TEA.
AH, THANKS!

ガチャン CLANG
WHOA!
ARE YOU OKAY, MISTER?
Y-YES...
SOMETIMES MY EYES SUDDENLY START HURTING...
THAT DOESN'T SOUND GOOD. DID YOU GO TO A DOCTOR?
NO, WELL... IT ALWAYS GOES AWAY AGAIN AFTER A FEW MOMENTS...
MEOW?
SNOW PAWS?
HAHAHA, STOP THAT ALREADY!
ざーりざーり LICK LICK
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME.

OW OW OW...
WAHHH
ぴく
Stare
ANY-ONE NEED A CAT PAIN-TING?
LET ME DRAW YOU ONE!
WHAA! A CAT!!
よた よた
TOTTERING
OH, DO YOU KNOW SNOW PAWS, MISTER?
OH? ISN'T THAT SNOW PAWS?


ACTUALLY, YOU KNOW...
HUH?

YEAH, I DREW A CAT PAINTING AT THAT SHOP OVER THERE THE OTHER DAY.
OH, HUH?
MISTER KYUZO'S SHOP IS CLOSED NOWADAYS, YOU KNOW?

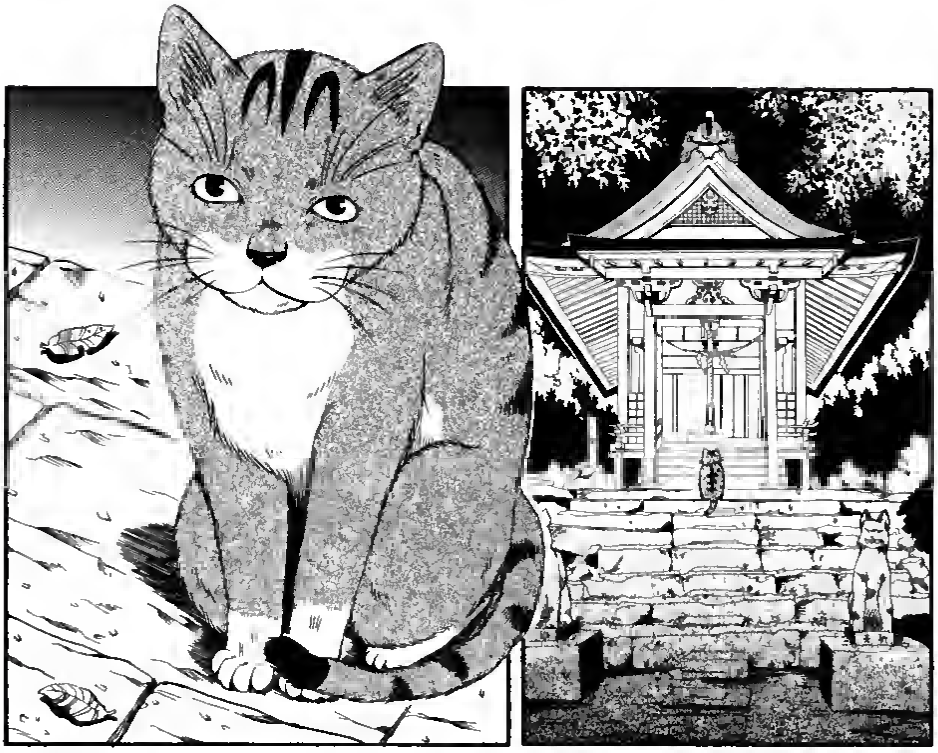
MISTER KYUZO IS BED-RIDDEN WITH AN EYE DISEASE.
A DISEASE ?

SNOW PAWS?

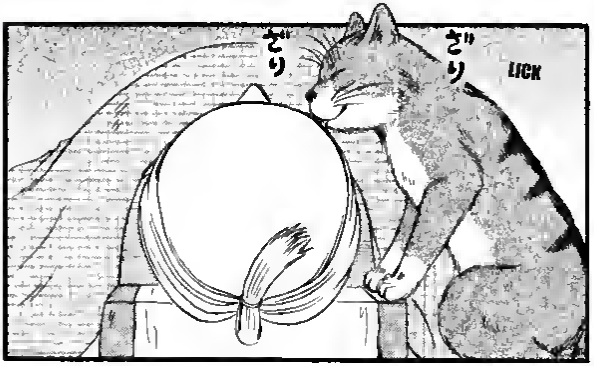
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
ちょい
ちょい

ACCORDING TO THE DOCTORS, HE'LL GO BLIND IN BOTH EYES.
IT'S SUCH A SHAME.

HAHAHA
YOU'RE SUCH A SWEETIE!
THANK YOU, SNOW PAWS.
ざ〜り ざり
LICK LICK
ざ〜り ざり
HEY, THAT TICK-LES!
THIS ISN'T LIKE A WOUND THAT'LL HEAL IF YOU LICK IT, YOU KNOW?
カサ RUSTLE
カサ RUSTLE
TURN
ムク
TOTTERING
よたた



ざりっ
LICK


ざり
ざり
LICK

COLD
I SMELL SNOW IN THE AIR, JUBEI.
WHOA, IT'S COLD...
BLOW!
HEY, SNOW PAWS!
IT'LL START FALLING SOON.
OH, THERE HE IS!
MEOW!
HAVE SOME BOILED BONITO BEFORE YOU GO!

DO YOU LIKE IT?
MEOW !
THE FIRST SNOW OF THE YEAR HUH...

カランカラン
RING
RING
カランカラン
RING
カランカラン
RING
カランカラン
RING

LICK
LICK
YOU FEEL SO COLD!
WHERE DID YOU GO?
SNOW PAWS!
MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN LICKING ME ALL THE TIME ...
IT'S OKAY, YOU CAN GET UNDER THE SHEETS.
LICK
BUT MY PAIN FEELS LIKE IT HAS ALMOST TOTALLY DISAP-PEARED...

HUH!? SNOW PAWS!?
PURR ゴロゴロ
OH MY, YOU'VE GOTTEN SO THIN!
AND ONE OF YOUR EYES...
PURR ゴロゴロ

D-DON'T TELL ME YOU...!!
MEOW MEOW !!
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
MEOW!
MEOW!
ぴょん、JUMP
ぴょん
SNOW PAWS !
MEOW !

SNOW PAWS!!
MEOW!
MEO-MEOW !!
COME BACK!
IT'S LIKE A SNOW STORM OUT-SIDE!
CRUNCH
CRUNCH
IT'S COLD OUTSIDE! COME BACK INSIDE WHERE IT'S WARM!
HEY ...!

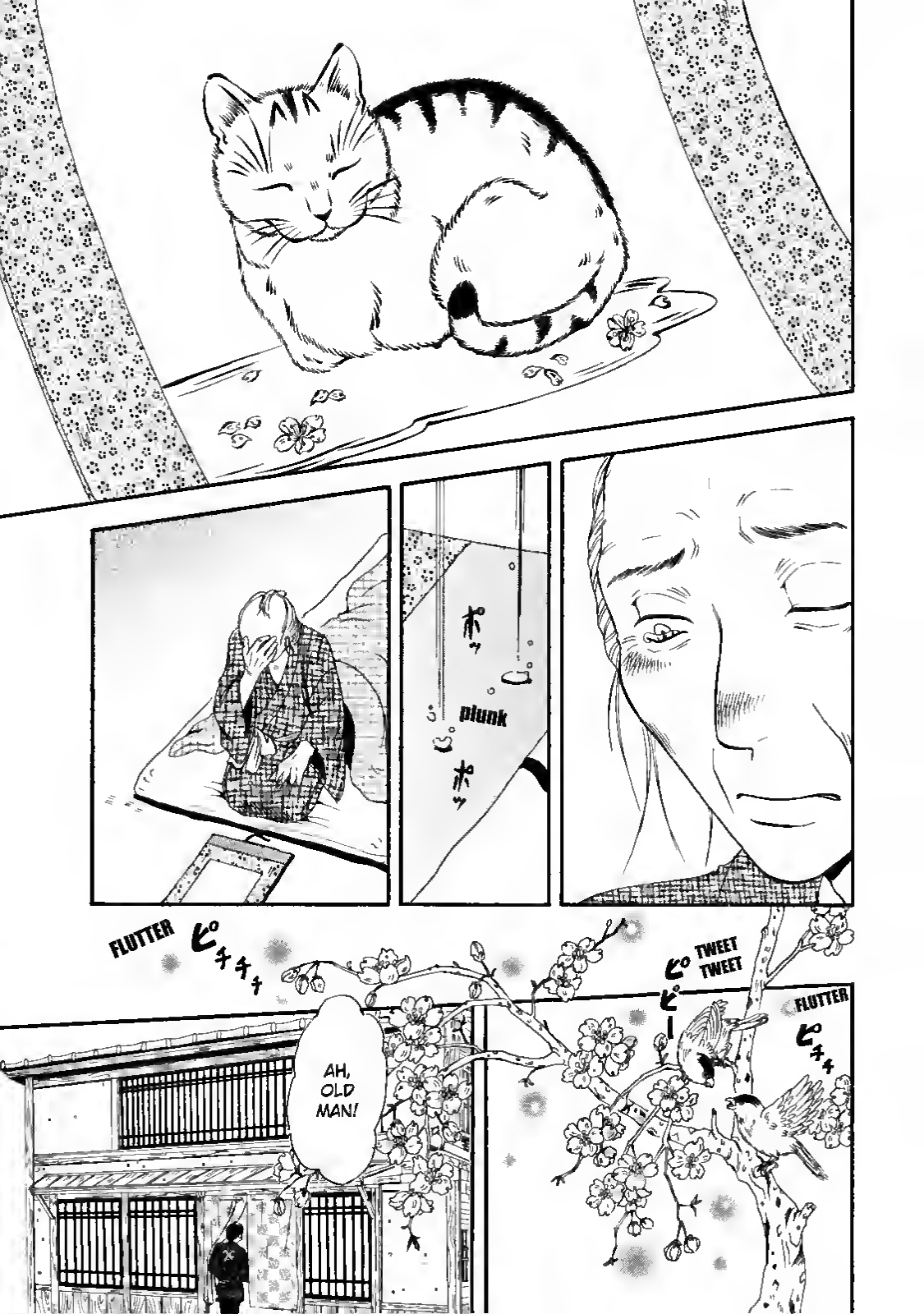
SNOW PAWS !!
HHHOOOOWWWLLL

MISTER ...
TAP
YOU'LL CATCH A COLD HERE.
IT'S SAD, WHEN YOU KNOW THAT SNOW PAWS CAME IN FRONT OF THE SHRINE EVERY DAY TO PRAY...
SPHHH
THE SNOW...
HUH?
...IT HAS HIDDEN EVERTHING!
EVEN IF I WANTED TO FOLLOW HIS FOOT-PRINTS,
I CAN'T, BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL GONE NOW!
EVEN THOUGH I CAN SEE AGAIN NOW...
HOW CAN I FEEL HAPPY ABOUT IT, WHEN A DEAR MEMBER OF MY FAMILY DISAPPEARED!

SNOW PAWS ...!
COULDN'T YOU SEE THAT...?
DOOR SIGN: CAT PAINTINGS
YOU'RE SUCH A FOOLISH CAT!
WEL-COME HOME!
HOW ABOUT A DRINK?
THUMP
THUMP

THUD
ばふっ
YOU SURE SEEM TO BE IN A BAD MOOD!
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO GO ON THE DAY HIS PRAYER WOULD BE ANSWERED?
THAT'S WHAT HE PRAYED FOR AFTER ALL,
IT CAN'T BE HELPED.
SUDDEN
HUH !?
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO DRAW SO SUDDENLY?
FLAP
FLAP
I WON'T HELP YOU PUT THE SOUL IN IT, YOU KNOW?
I'M DONE FOR THE DAY!
MEO-HO-HO!
THAT'S FINE.
SKREEK
THIS CAT WON'T HAVE TO DRIVE ANY MICE AWAY.

HEY, MISTER KYUZO!
SO I HEARD YOU WERE STILL BED-RIDDEN?
ANCIENT SONG OF A TIME LONG PAST...
THE FLOWERS AND SNOW, AT A CLEAR MOUNTAIN FOOT.
BOIL
EVERY-ONE IN TOWN IS LONGING TO EAT YOUR MEALS AGAIN, YOU KNOW?
OUCH! WHAT A VIOLENT YOUNG CAT PAINTER!
OWW... WHAT'S THIS...
SEE YOU ARO-UND!
he he he
HERE! A LITTLE PRESENT FOR THE SICK!
WHACK
OW !!


plunk
FLUTTER
ピチチ
TWEET TWEET
ピピー
FLUTTER
ピチチ
AH, OLD MAN!

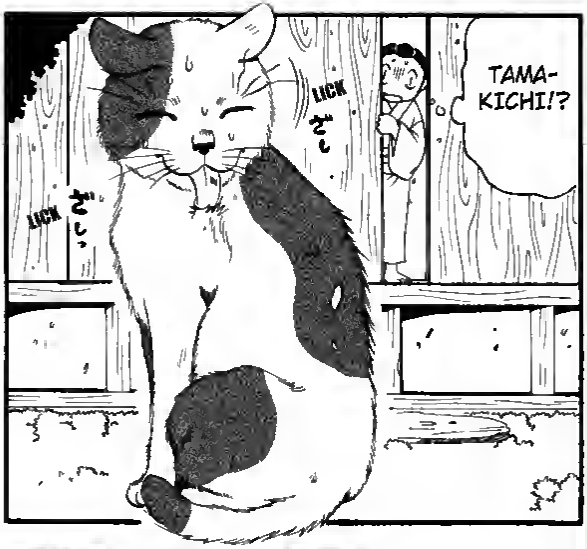
COME IN!
COME IN!
RIGHT AWAY!
THE SAME AS ALWAYS, AND A CUP OF SAKE TO GO WITH IT!
HMMM ?
MORE THAN ANYTHING, THIS CAT REALLY SEEMS TO BE ENJOYING ITS LITTLE NAP.
YES, IT'S CALLED SNOW PAWS AND THE SPRING BREEZE.
OH, A HANGING SCROLL?

SIGN: CAT PAINTER JUBEI

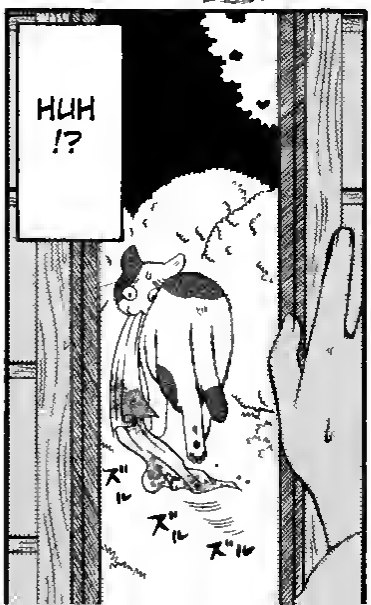
END OF CHAPTER I

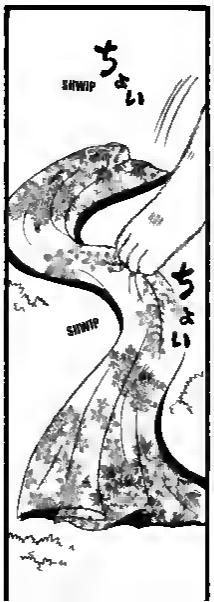
MEOW!
MEOW! ♪
MEO-MEOW! ♪
MEOW ...!
STAGGER
STAGGER
MEO-MEOW!

すとんっ
FALL
MEO-OW !!


TAMA-KICHI!?
LICK ざっ
LICK ざっ

HUH ...


HUH !?
ズル ズル ズル


ちょい SHWIP
ちょい SHWIP

EDO NEKOE JUBEI OTOGIZOSHI

猫絵十兵衛 御伽草紙

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし

CHAPTER II

CLUMSY CAT

BANNER:
MOUSE DETERRING
CAT PAINTINGS

CAT PAINTER JUBEI

SIGN: KAZUSAYA

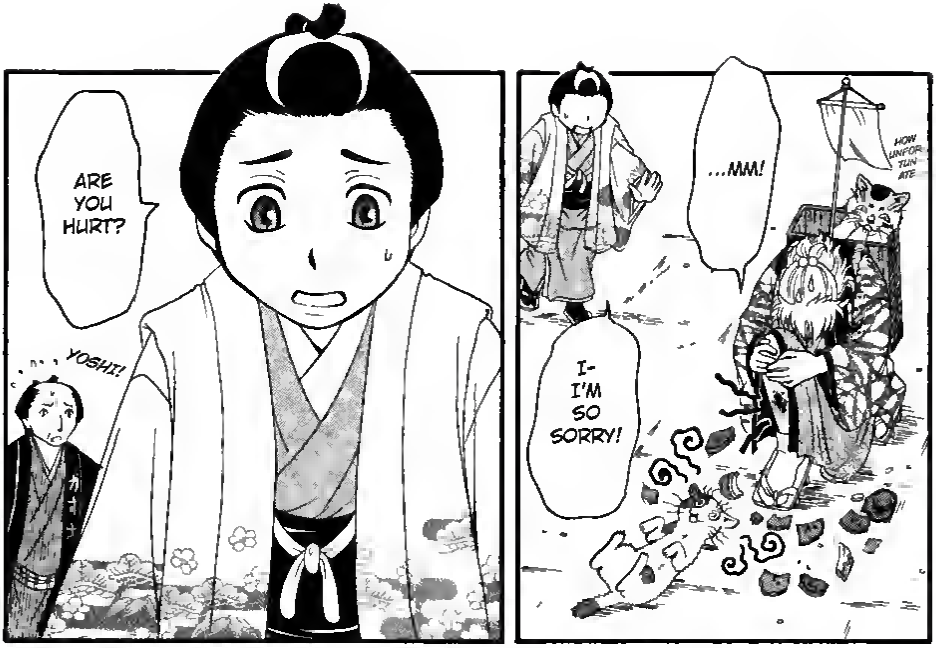
SIGN: KAZUSAYA

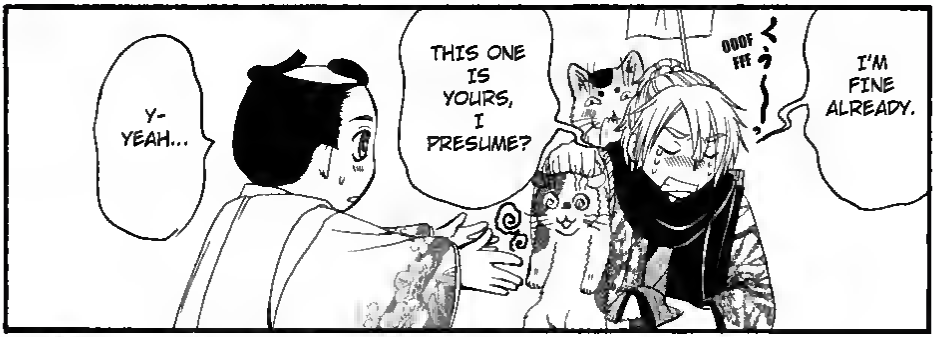
POCHAN
IT MUST BE TAMA-KICHI...
NO!
BUT, IT ISN'T THE TYPE OF CAT THAT CAUSES MISCHIEF LIKE THAT...
MAYBE TAMAKICHI RAN AWAY WITH IT?
ACK
BUT, DOESN'T IT HAPPEN OFTEN LATELY THAT ONE OF YOUR HAND-CLOTH'S DISAPPEARS?
YOSHI! WHY YOU...
I TOOK IT TO PLAY WITH!
YOSHI!
HOW STUPID!!
WHO CARES ABOUT LOSING A HAND CLOTH OR TWO?

MEO-O-OO...!
ME-OO-O...
MEO-O-OO...!
たたたた STEP STEP
TAMA-KICHI?
LET ME DRAW YOU A PAIN-TING!♪
ANY-ONE NEED A PAIN-TING?
CAT PAINT-INGS!

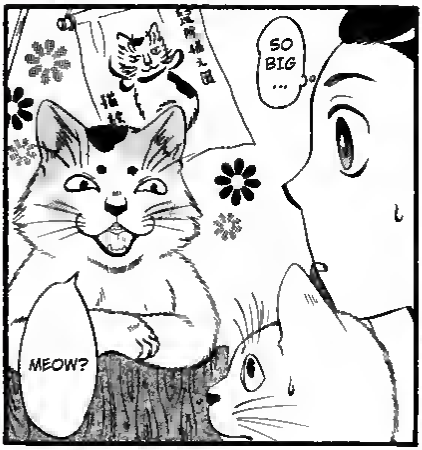
DRIVE YOUR MICE AWAY WITH MY CATS! ♪
HEY, LOOK HERE!
THE PLUM TREES ARE BLOS-SOMING.
SO THE SPRING'S HERE...
YOU KNOW PLUM BLOSSOMS ARE THE EARLIEST TO BLOOM OF ALL FLOWERS, SO THAT'S WHY PEOPLE CALL THEM THE BIG BROTHER OF ALL FLOWERS.
SHUT UP, NITA!
AND THE YOUNGEST IS THE CHRYSANTHEMUM
ALSO, HIDE THAT DOUBLE TAIL OF YOURS!
ポン
ポン
WE HAVEN'T DONE A SINGLE PAINTING THIS MORNING, I'M SO BORED!
ISN'T IT ALL RIGHT? THERE'S NO ONE AROUND
WHY DON'T YOU WALK ON YOUR OWN FOUR FEET FOR A CHANGE THEN??
NO THANK YOU.
YOU LAZY LOAF...
CLANK
ガチャーン
CLINK
ガシャン
WHA-AA!!
DRAG
ドカッ

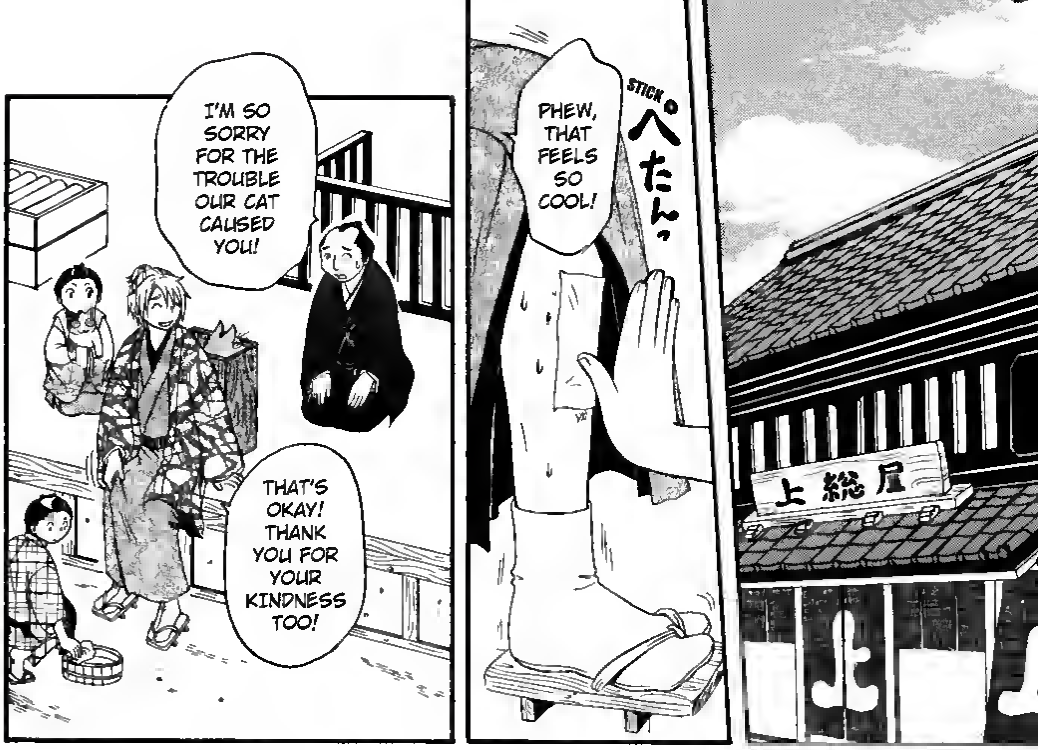
TAMA-KICHI!!
TAMA-KICHI!
A CAT WITH ITS HEAD INSIDE A CLAY POT...?
THUD
ガチャン
CLUNK
HM?





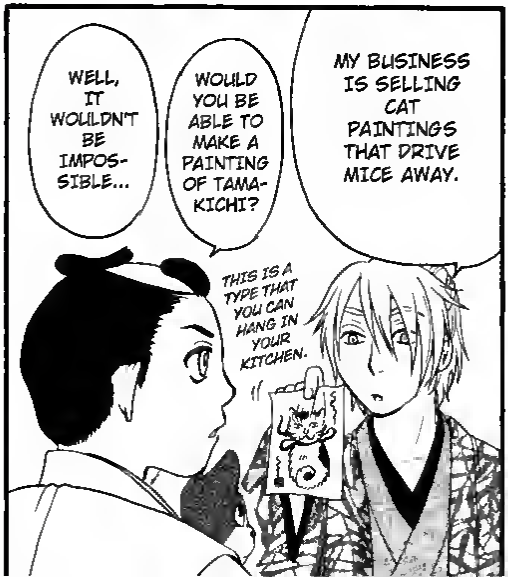
BANNER: MOUSE DETERRING CAT PAINTINGS - CAT PAINTER JUBEI



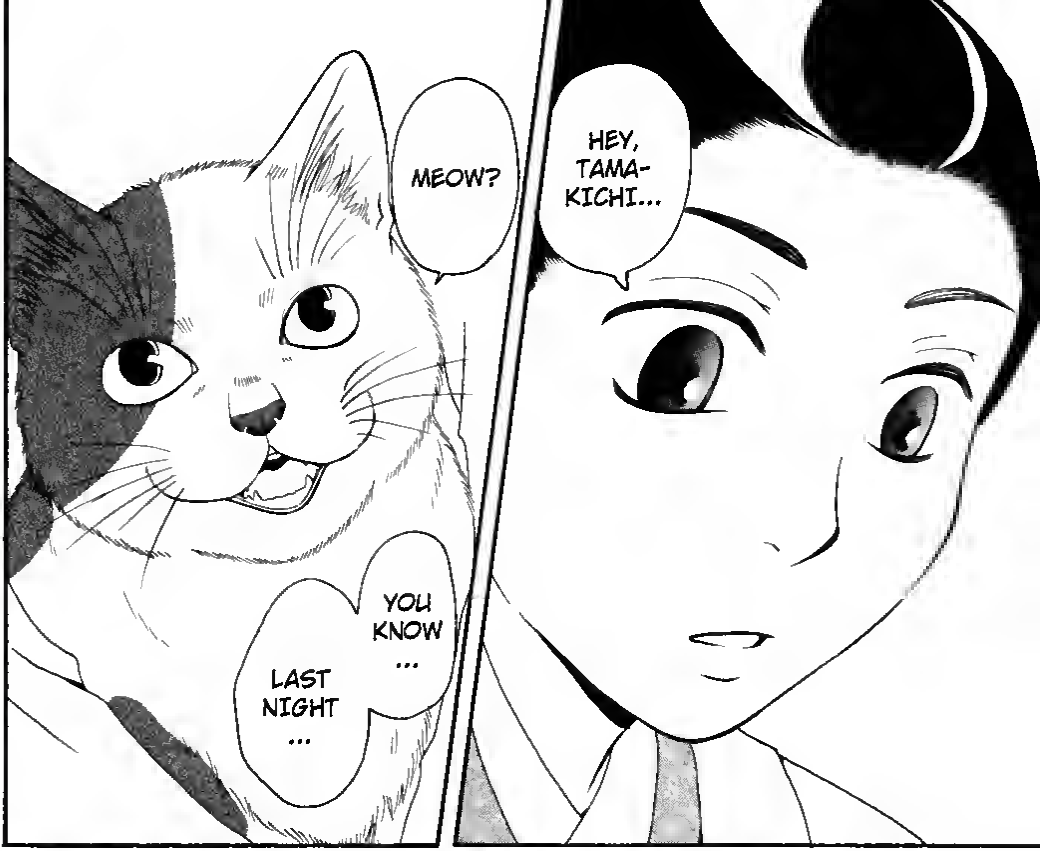

I'M SO SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE OUR CAT CAUSED YOU!
THAT'S OKAY! THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS TOO!
STICK
ぺたん
PHEW, THAT FEELS SO COOL!
上総屋

SIGN: KAZUSAYA

I'LL BE ON MY WAY NOW...
OH, PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT.
TEA IS BEING PREPARED AT THE MOMENT.
UMM... MISTER CAT PERSON? DO YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT CATS?

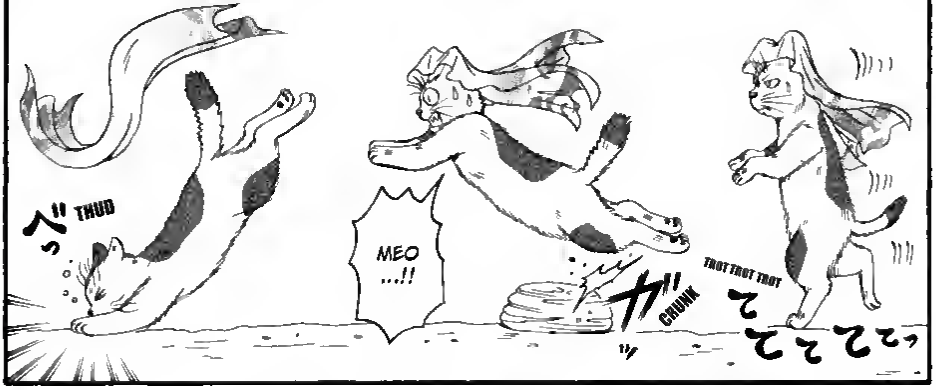

WELL, IT WOULDN'T BE IMPOS-SIBLE...
WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO MAKE A PAINTING OF TAMA-KICHI?
MY BUSINESS IS SELLING CAT PAINTINGS THAT DRIVE MICE AWAY.
THIS IS A TYPE THAT YOU CAN HANG IN YOUR KITCHEN.

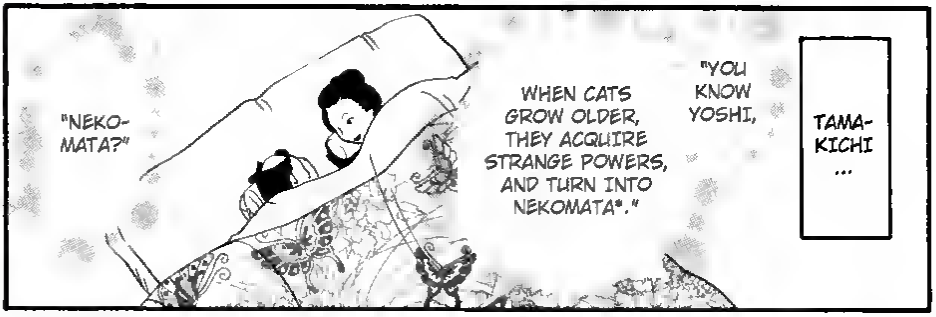
YOU SUCK, DAD!!
THUD
OH MY...
THUD
プチ
HUMM
PLEASE DO THAT FOR ME THEN!
RIGHT NOW!
YOSHI-TARO, DON'T BE SO UNREASON-ABLE!
BUT I'VE BROUGHT NOTHING BUT INK...
AH, I SEE...
BECAUSE THERE ARE ONLY ADULTS AROUND HERE, TAMAKICHI IS HIS ONLY PLAYMATE, YOU SEE...
I'M TRULY SORRY. HE'S BEEN REALLY STUBBORN LATELY...
THAT OAF !!
YO-SHI !
HMM ...
TAMA-KICHI...
MEOW-WW ...


HEY, TAMA-KICHI...
MEOW?
YOU KNOW ...
LAST NIGHT ...

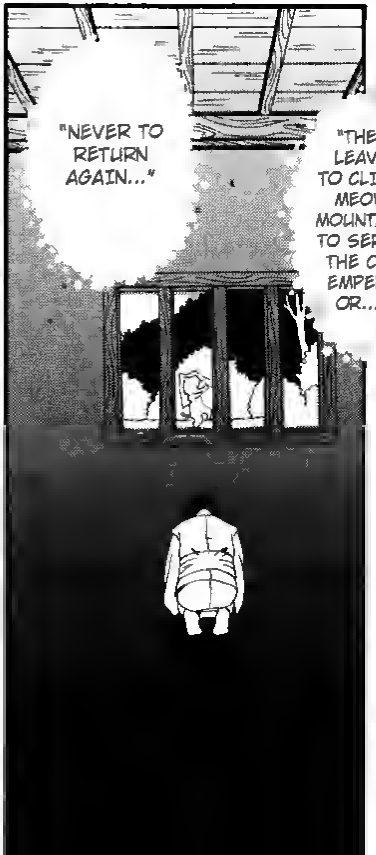
LET'S STAY TOGET-HER FOR-EVER,
OKAY?
PUR-RR
PUR-RR
AH...
NEVER MIND.

MEOW !!
MEOW !
よっとっとっと
TOTTER
PLOP
ぺっそ
MEO-∞…
SHAKE
ブル
ブル
SHAKE
ブル
SHAKE





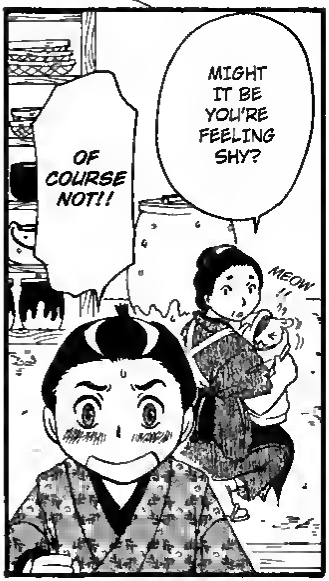
*MYTHICAL TWO-TAILED CAT



STOMP
SQU-EAK!
WHAA!! A MOUSE !!
WHA !!
NGAOOHRRR
RARGH !!

MEO ...!!
MISS
SLIP
WOOSH
SPLASH
HEHEHE
MR. TAMAKICHI SURE IS A CLUMSY ONE...
OH DEAR, LAST TIME GETTING HIS HEAD STUCK IN A CLAY POT, NOW DIVING INTO A POND HUH...
SPLAT
MEO OO-W!!
SPLAT

ざーり
LICK
ざーり
LICK

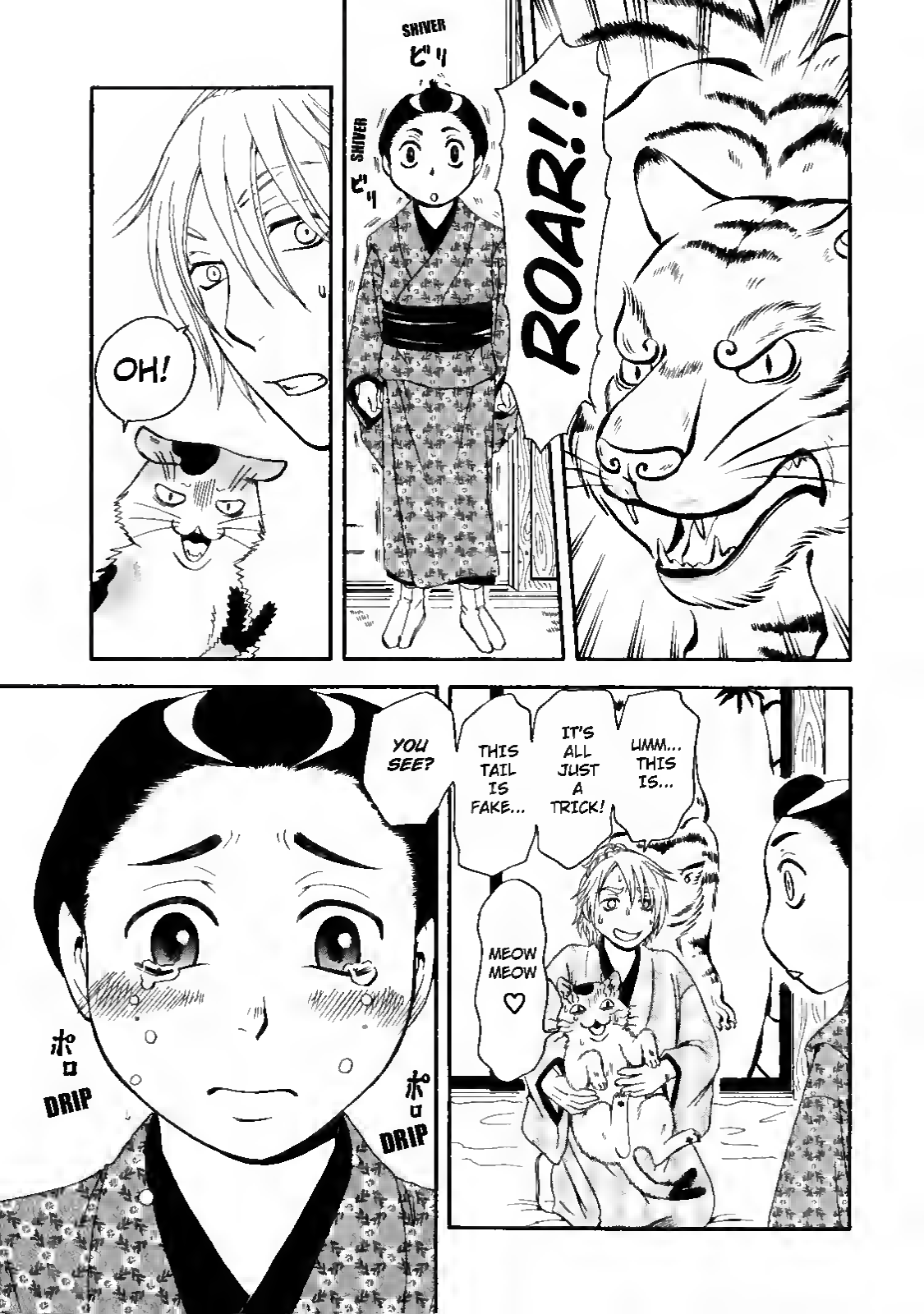

MIGHT IT BE YOU'RE FEELING SHY?
OF COURSE NOT!!
MEOW!!

HEY YOSHI, WHY DON'T YOU GO WATCH THE PAINTER?
S-SURE...
YOUR FATHER CALLED HIM HERE ANYWAY
ME-OW!!

YOU KNOW YOU'RE BAD AT CATCHING MICE, SO WHY ARE YOU EVEN TRYING?
AND THAT AFTER THE INCIDENT WITH THAT POT LAST TIME
LOITER
LOITER
ME-OW!

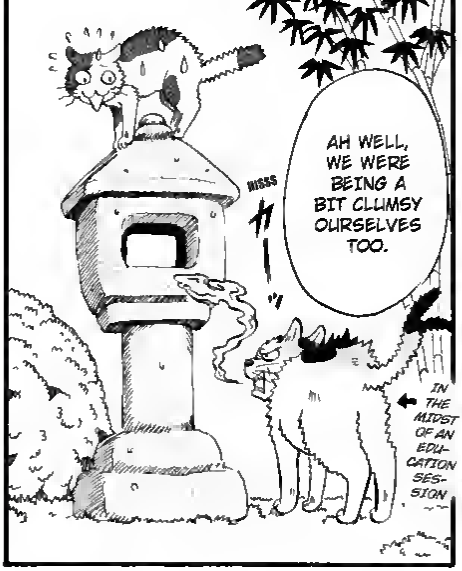
HUH?
THE OWNER OF KAZUSAYA TOLD US A TIGER WOULD SUIT A BOY BETTER THAN A CAT!
IDIOT! THAT'S NOT A CAT! IT'S A TIGER!!
NOW THAT'S A RATHER LARGE CAT, JUBEI!
WHA-HA-HA-HA!

WELL, THEY'RE PRETTY ALIKE ANYWAY.
YOU THINK SO?
ALL RIGHT, GRAND-MASTER NITA! GIVE IT THE FINISHING TOUCH!
SURE.
DIP
ポン
KAHH
RUMMMM

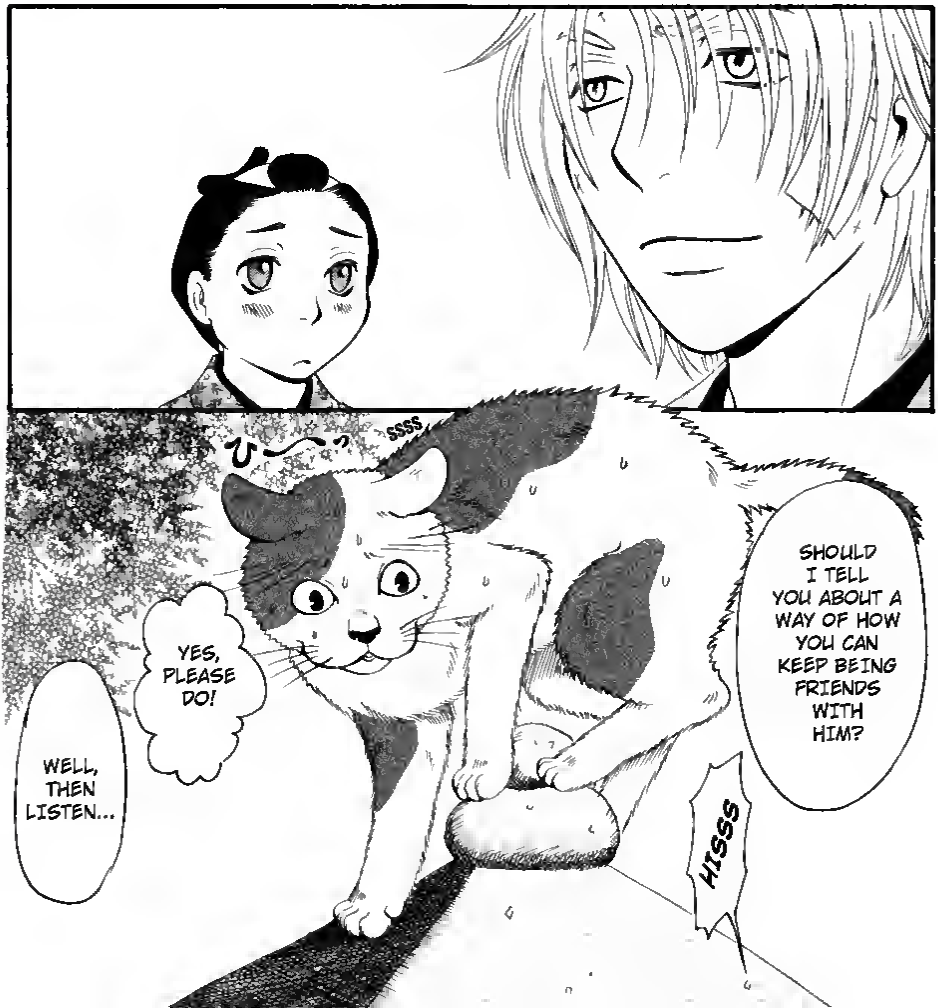

ROAR!!
SHIVER
ビリ
SHIVER
ビリ
OH!
UMM... THIS IS...
IT'S ALL JUST A TRICK!
THIS TAIL IS FAKE...
MEOW MEOW ♡
YOU SEE?
ポロ
DRIP
ポロ
DRIP

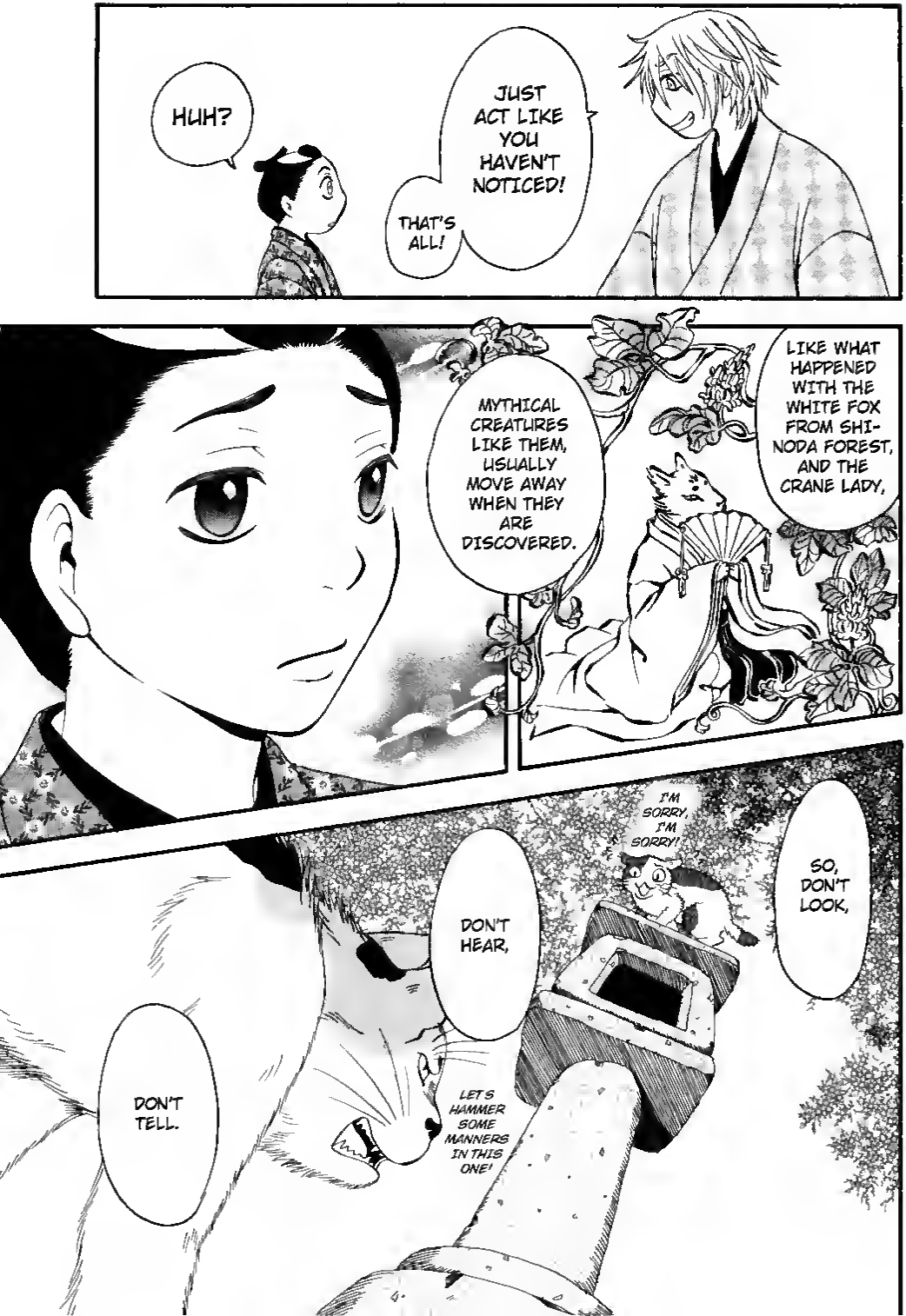
DON'T TAKE HIM WITH YOU TO MEOW MOUNTAIN !!
SO, PLEASE, I BEG YOU!!
HUH? THE TIGER ...?
I... I DON'T WANT IT!
SHUIEK
WHIL
TAMA-KICHI IS OUR CAT!
EVEN IF HE TURNS INTO A NEKOMATA, I'D STILL WANT HIM TO STAY WITH US!
わぁあぁあん
WAHHHHHH
OH MAN...
UMM...
WE'RE NOT PLANNING ON TAKING YOUR TAMAKICHI ANY...
カカカカカカ
SCRATCH

...WHERE ...
...REALLY!
YOU'RE BULLYING OUR BOY!
NO!
ARGH
シャ
SCHA
WHA-AA-AH!!!
TSK ...


AH WELL, WE WERE BEING A BIT CLUMSY OURSELVES TOO.
HISSS
IN THE MIDST OF AN EDUCATION SESSION

I'M SORRY!
YOUR CAT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE THE ONLY CLUMSY ONE AROUND HERE.
DO YOU REALLY THINK SOMEONE FROM MEOW MOUNTAIN WOULD COME ALL THE WAY HERE TO DRAW A CAT PAINTING?


SSSS
YES, PLEASE DO!
WELL, THEN LISTEN...
SHOULD I TELL YOU ABOUT A WAY OF HOW YOU CAN KEEP BEING FRIENDS WITH HIM?
HISSS

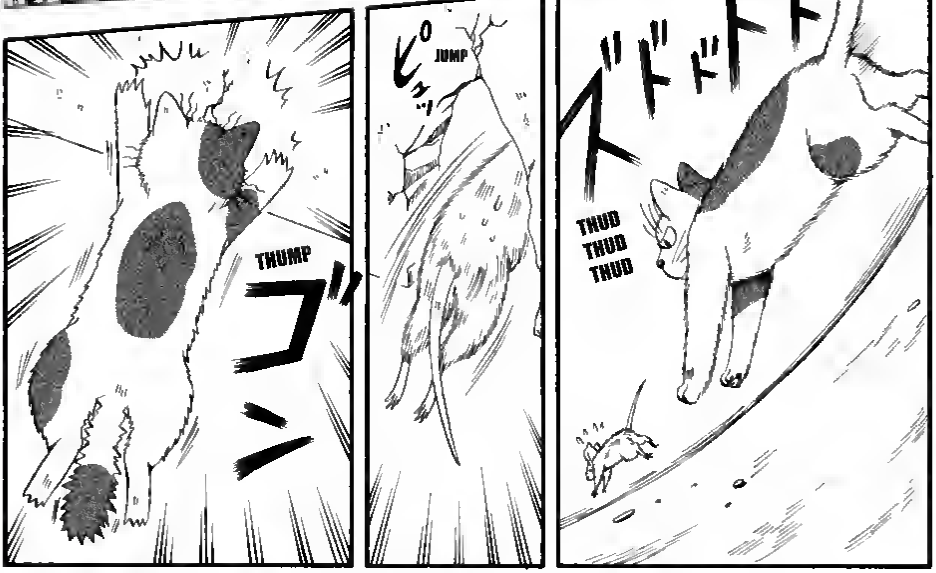

HUH?
JUST ACT LIKE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED!
THAT'S ALL!
LIKE WHAT HAPPENED WITH THE WHITE FOX FROM SHI-NODA FOREST, AND THE CRANE LADY,
MYTHICAL CREATURES LIKE THEM, USUALLY MOVE AWAY WHEN THEY ARE DISCOVERED.
SO, DON'T LOOK,
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY!
DON'T HEAR,
LET'S HAMMER SOME MANNERS IN THIS ONE!
DON'T TELL.

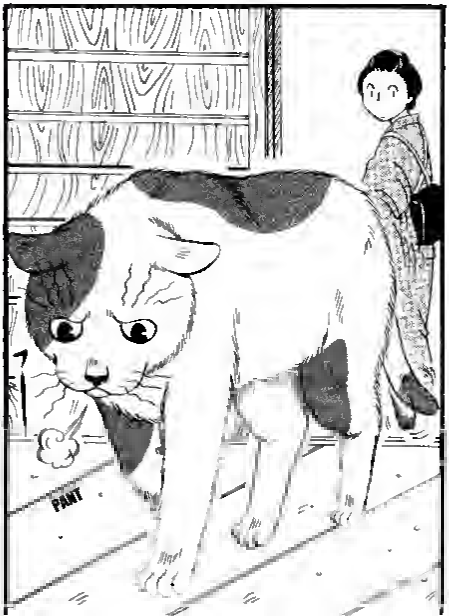
AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER THOSE THREE RULES, I DON'T THINK HE'LL BE LEAVING YOU ANYTIME SOON.
THERE'S A LOT OF LEGENDS ABOUT MEOW MOUNTAIN, YOU KNOW?
STOMP
STOMP
NYAH
BESIDES,
LOOKING AT HOW HE EVEN STOOD UP AGAINST A REAL NEKO-MATA,
I'LL FORGIVE HIM THIS TIME
TSK!
IT SHOWS THAT HE MUST REALLY LIKE YOU A LOT.

YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO CARE FOR HIM AS BEST AS YOU CAN!
YEAH...!
ホーホケキョ
KAW KAW
ケッキョ
TWEET
ケッキョ
TWEET

SO WHY WAS HE DOING ALL THAT PRACTICING WITH THOSE HANDCLOTHS THEN?
TAMAKICHI WASN'T EVEN CLOSE TO TURNING INTO A NEKOMATA ...
HAHAHA, THERE'S A PRETTY BORING REASON FOR THAT.
COME AGAIN!!
CHUCKLE CHUCKLE
HE JUST WANTED TO BE BETTER AT CATCHING MICE.
HAHAHA, STAYING AS A NORMAL CAT WOULD PROBABLY BE BEST FOR HIM!
AND HE WAS EVEN CLUMSY AT THAT HUH...
HAHA, LOOKS LIKE YOSHITARO WILL BE HAVING A TOUGH TIME!

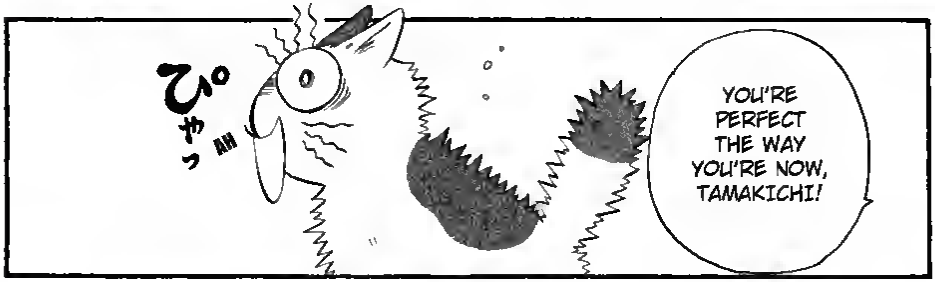
上総屋
SIGN: KAZUSAYA


THUMP
ドゴ
JUMP
ピョッ
THUD
THUD
THUD
ズドドド


PANT

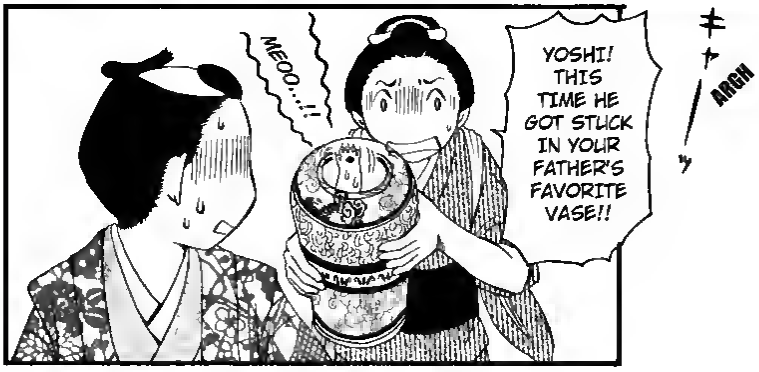
Scratch
カリカリ
WHY DON'T YOU GO TO YOSHI'S ROOM?
OH, TAMA-KICHI? ARE YOU PLAYING?

I JUST WANT TO BECOME MORE USEFUL AS A CAT!
MR. TIGER,
MR. TIGER!


ぴゃっ!!!
YOU'RE PERFECT THE WAY YOU'RE NOW, TAMAKICHI!

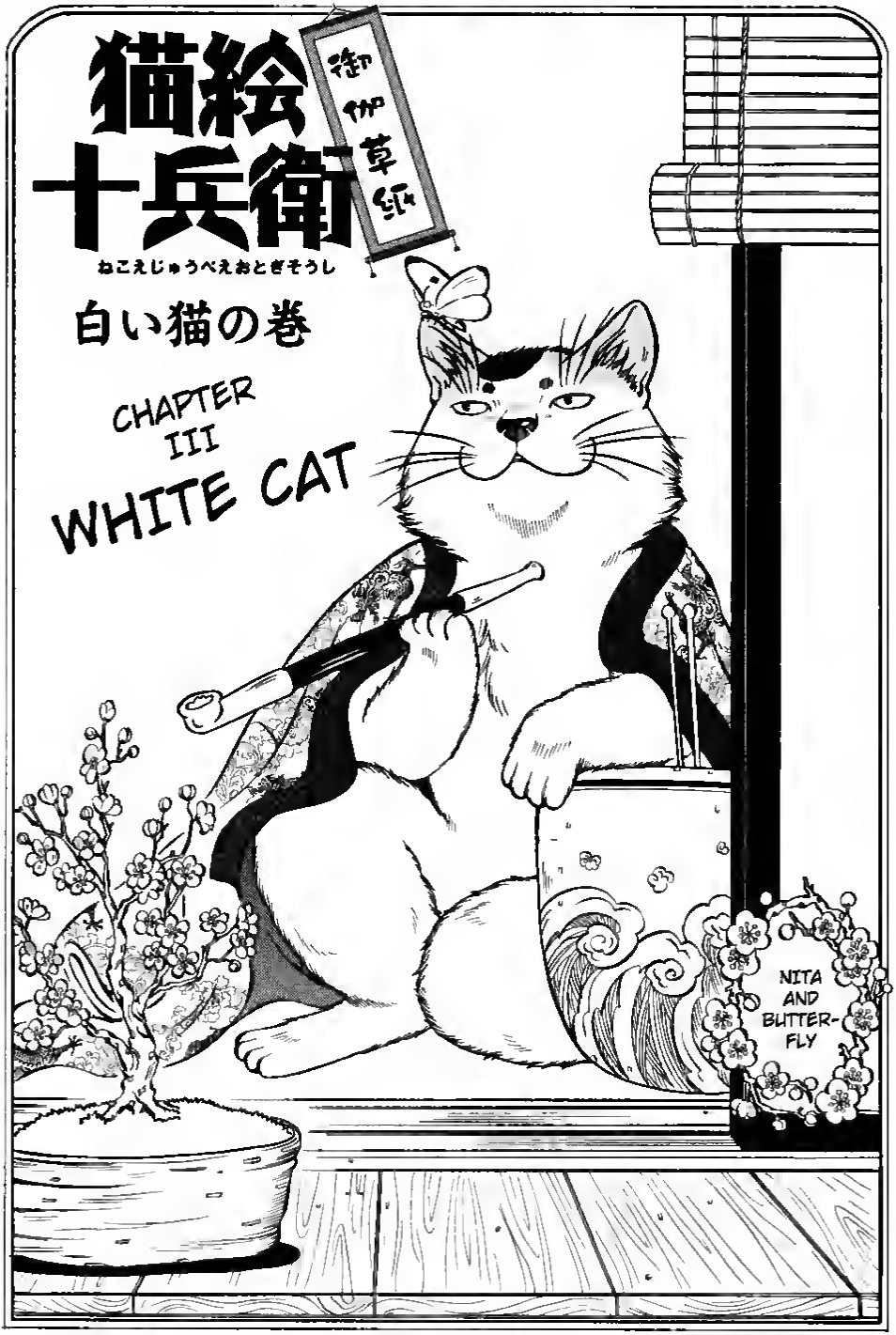
ドキ
ドキ
?
?
FWIP

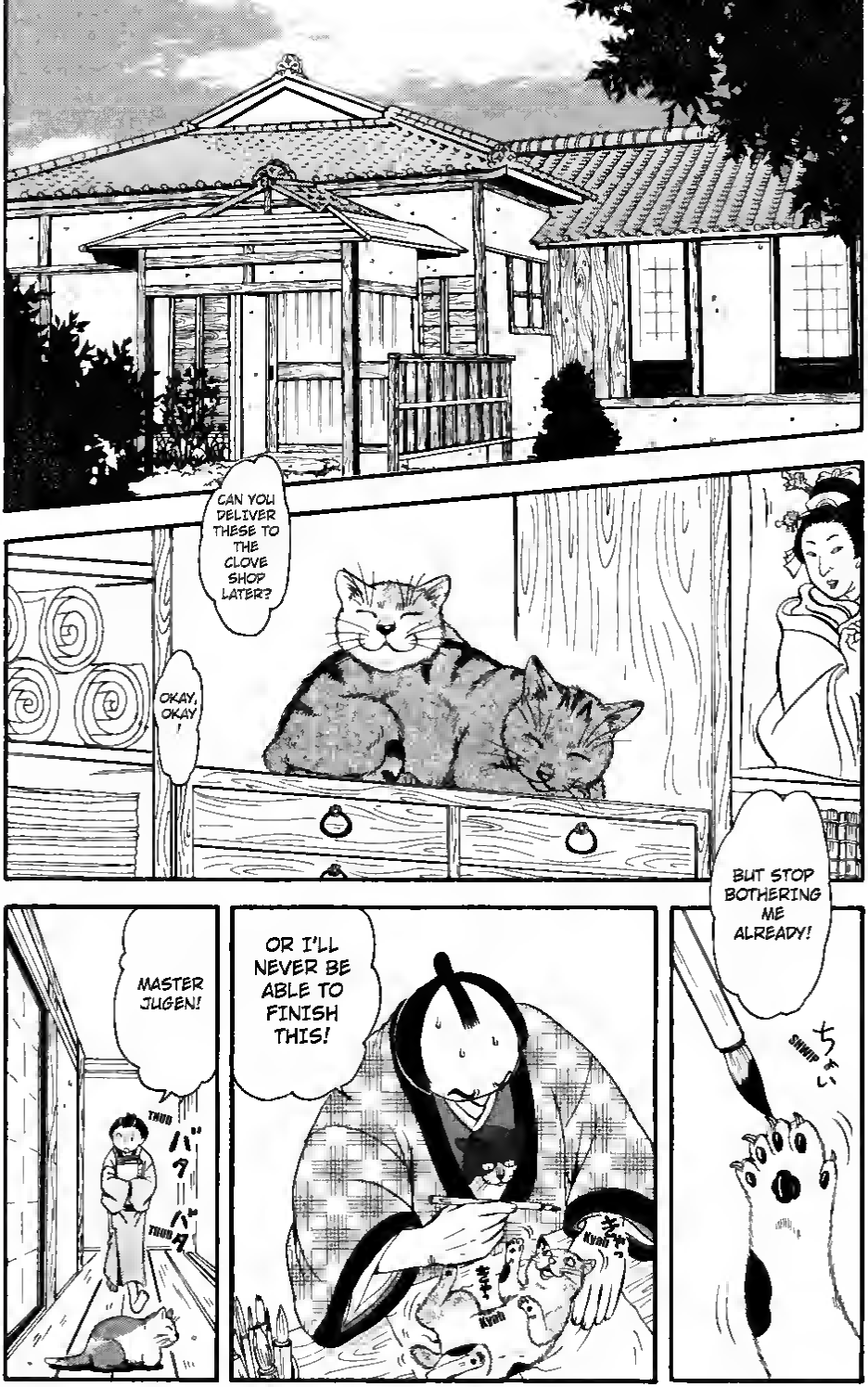
?
PHOOO スー
PHOOO スー
もぞ
SNUGGLE
もぞ
SNUGGLE
AH WELL ...
mmmmm
もふっ



END OF CHAPTER II

SIGN: CAT PAINTER JUBEI

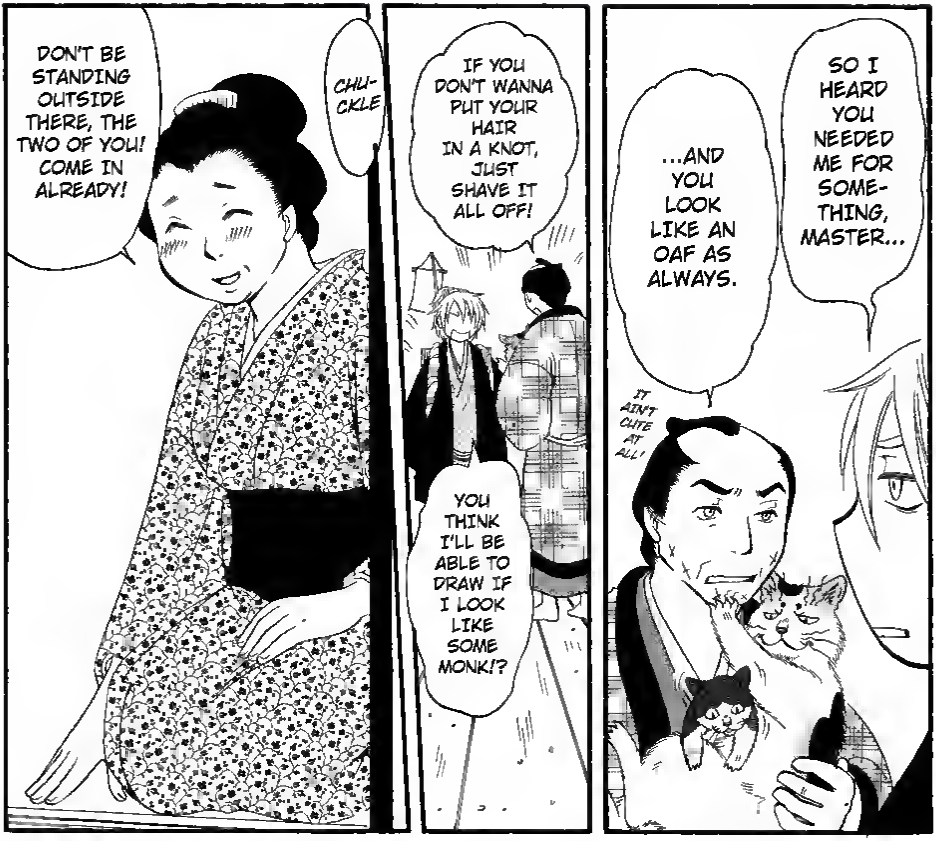

猫絵十兵衛
御伽草紙
ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし
白い猫の巻
CHAPTER III
WHITE CAT
NITA AND BUTTER-FLY

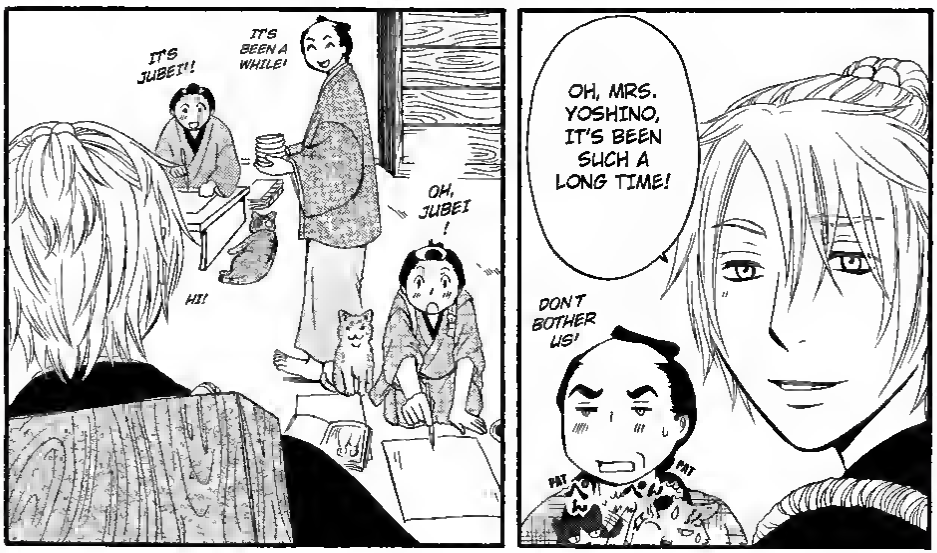

CAN YOU DELIVER THESE TO THE CLOVE SHOP LATER?
OKAY, OKAY!
BUT STOP BOTHERING ME ALREADY!
ちぃ
SHWIP
MASTER JUGEN!
THUD
バタ
バタ
THUD
OR I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FINISH THIS!
キャッ
Kyah!
キャ
Kyah

WHAHAHAHA!
HOW STUPID...
TOMI! CAN'T YOU WATCH YOUR STEP A LITTLE BIT?
OH !!
MEOWWWW!!
HELLO?

IS MASTER CATLUCK HERE?
AH ! THERE YOU ARE!
THUD ドカ
ドカ THUD
JUGEN YOSHINO
USES PEN NAMES LIKE 'CATLUCK'

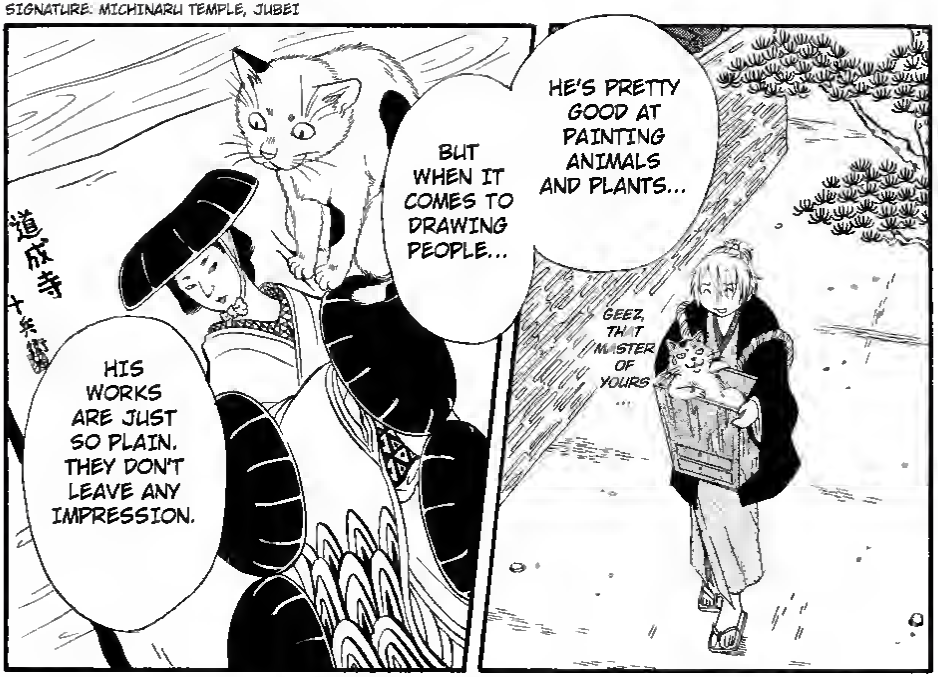
ERK
ギクッ
JU-
BEI...
AND!!
ちわ！
MEOOWW!!
ちゅっ♥
KISS
ちゅっ♥
KISS
ちゅっ♥
KISS
THAT IS JUST WHAT MAKES YOU SO CUTE!
TRYING NOT TO LOOK CUTE LIKE ALWAYS HUH?
MY LITTLE NITA !! ♡

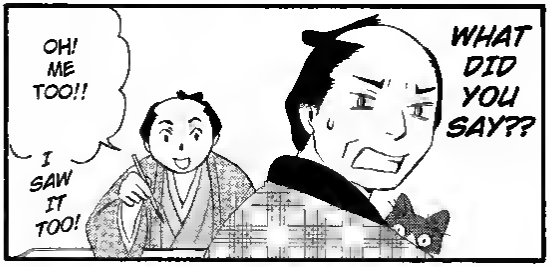

SO I HEARD YOU NEEDED ME FOR SOME-THING, MASTER...
...AND YOU LOOK LIKE AN OAF AS ALWAYS.
IT AIN'T CUTE AT ALL!
IF YOU DON'T WANNA PUT YOUR HAIR IN A KNOT, JUST SHAVE IT ALL OFF!
YOU THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO DRAW IF I LOOK LIKE SOME MONK!?
CHU-CKLE
DON'T BE STANDING OUTSIDE THERE, THE TWO OF YOU! COME IN ALREADY!

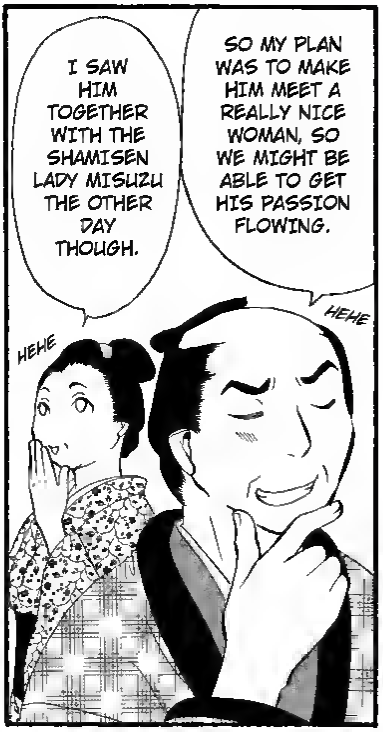

OH, MRS. YOSHINO, IT'S BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME!
DON'T BOTHER US!
PAT
PAT
IT'S JUBEI!!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
OH, JUBEI!
HI!

TALKING ABOUT CATS, HAVE YOU HEARD OF OSHIMA FROM THE FUKUYA PLACE IN FRONT OF GOTOKU TEMPLE?
HAHAHA
LOOKS LIKE THIS ONE'S PREGNANT!
HISS
LOOKS LIKE YOU GOT A FEW NEW CATS AGAIN!
YOU'RE ASKING ME TO DRAW A WOMAN ...?
WAIT ...
I'M SENDING YOU TO GO DRAW HER! EVERYTHING'S BEEN SETTLED ALREADY.
I SEE...
HUH?
SHE'S THE RECENTLY FAMED MAIDEN OF BENTEN*!
D-DON'T SAY ANYTHING FOOLISH LIKE THAT!!
CHILL CHILL
UMM ...
IS SHE ONE OF YOUR EROTIC INTERESTS?
OSHIMA?
*GODDESS OF ARTS AND WISDOM
WHA-AT??
STOP TALKING BACK AND GET TO IT ALREADY!!

YOU SAY THAT AS IF IT'S A PRIVILEGE ...
YEAH, YEAH...
DON'T EVEN TRY TO SHOW YOUR FACE HERE AGAIN UNTIL YOU'VE DONE IT!
うひゃ
UWAH
JU-BEI!!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO HARD ON HIM...
GEEZ, THAT GUY...


道成寺十兵衛
HIS WORKS ARE JUST SO PLAIN. THEY DON'T LEAVE ANY IMPRESSION.
BUT WHEN IT COMES TO DRAWING PEOPLE...
HE'S PRETTY GOOD AT PAINTING ANIMALS AND PLANTS...
GEEZ, THAT MASTER OF YOURS...


OH! ME TOO!!
I SAW IT TOO!
WHAT DID YOU SAY??

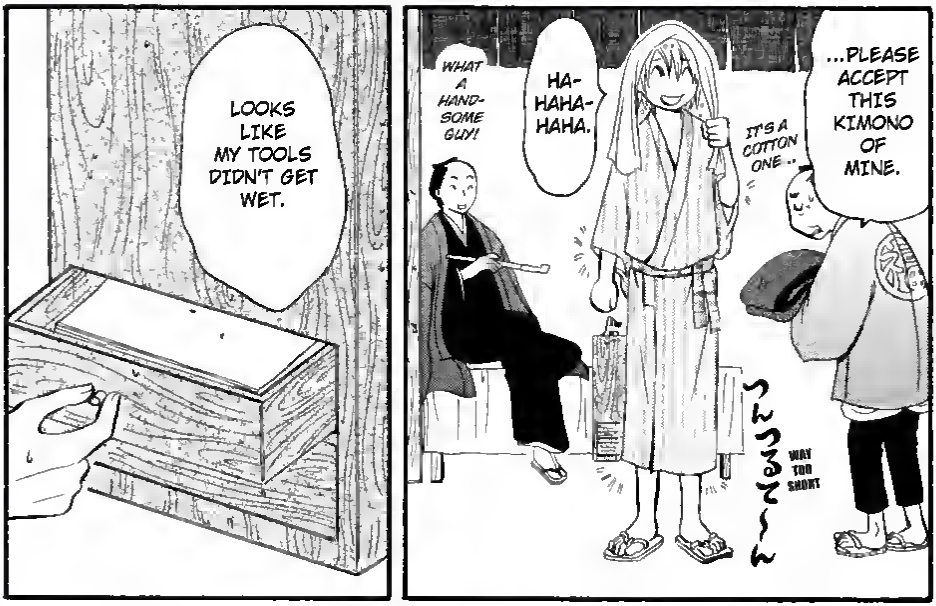

I SAW HIM TOGETHER WITH THE SHAMISEN LADY MISUZU THE OTHER DAY THOUGH.
SO MY PLAN WAS TO MAKE HIM MEET A REALLY NICE WOMAN, SO WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET HIS PASSION FLOWING.
HEHE
HEHE

BUT, IF THAT'S SO...
HUH? ARE YOU TELLING ME HE LIKES OLDER WOMEN!?
AND HE GETS ALONG WELL WITH MISS OGI, THE WIDOW, TOO!
ALTHOUGH SHE'S A GEISHA, THEY LOOKED REALLY LOVELY TOGETHER!
GENTLE

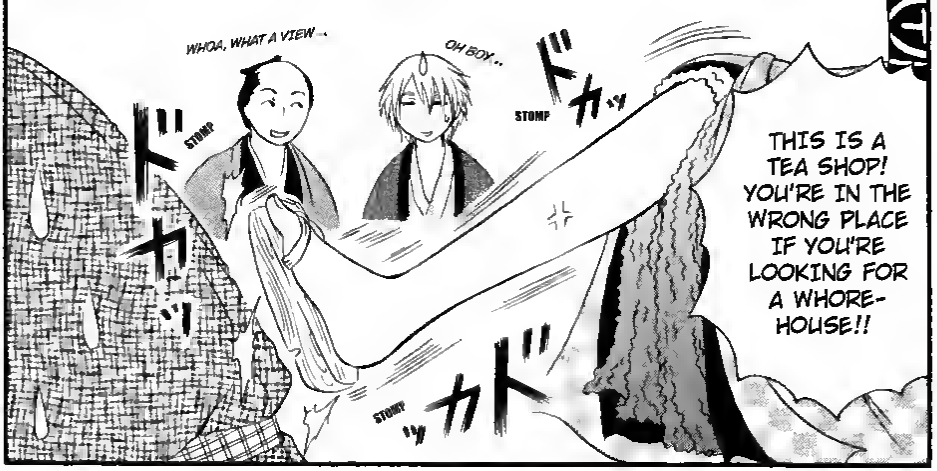
WHY ARE YOU SO BAD AT DRAWING PEOPLE?
プカ OOSSHH
WHY??
GO AWAY!!
NYAH
BUT THEN WHY DID YOU COME ALL THE WAY TO THE FRONT OF IT?
I'M NOT GOING !!
ぶぶ
HO HO
HMM?
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN THAT WAY FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER!
I DON'T KNOW!
RUSTLE
ぶちっ
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? BESIDES, AREN'T YOU GOING INSIDE THE TEA SHOP?
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT WEIRD LOOK OF YOURS?

MEOW!
BOUNCE
DON'T EVER COME HERE AGAIN!!
SPLASH
WHOOSH

OH...
ARE YOU OKAY, YOUNG MAN?
WELL, THANKS TO YOU...
OSHIMA !!
YEAH, YEAH...
BANNER: FUKUYA
UNTIL YOUR CLOTHES HAVE DRIED...
RING-LING
ふくや
ねこぐさ
RING-LING
DOOR SIGN: FUKUYA CAT GRASS
BANNER: SWEET RICEWINE


LOOKS LIKE MY TOOLS DIDN'T GET WET.
...PLEASE ACCEPT THIS KIMONO OF MINE.
IT'S A COTTON ONE..
HA-HAHA-HAHA.
WHAT A HAND-SOME GUY!
つんつるてーん
WAY TOO SHORT

ALL RIGHT...
MIGHT IT BE YOU ARE JUBEI THE CAT PAINTER?
...MM!
FEEL
さわっ
YOU PIG!!
かーん
KERPLOW
AH!



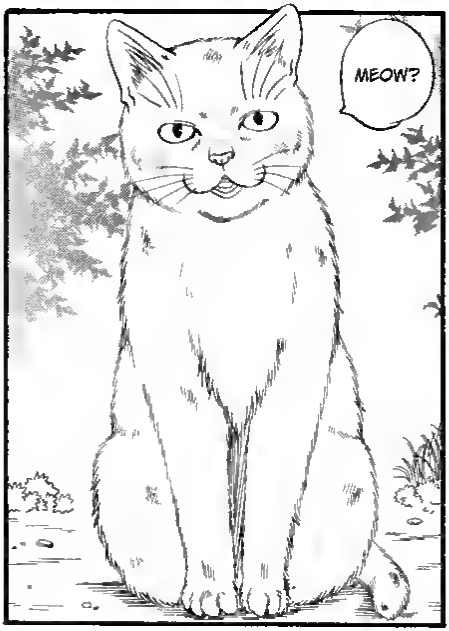
THAT'S JUST WHAT'S NICE ABOUT HER.
SENDS SHIVERS THROUGH YOUR SPINE, DOESN'T IT?
RATHER THAN A MAIDEN OF BENTEN, YOU COULD CALL HER A MAIDEN OF THE DEVIL!
SHE'S SCARY

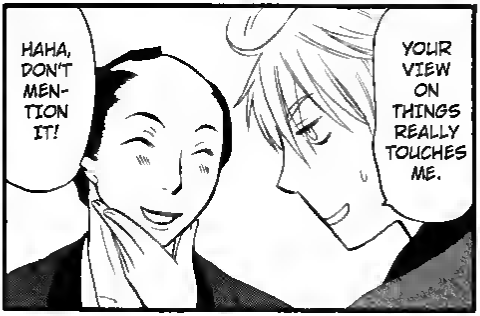
*FUNEMANJU IS THE NAME OF A SWEET, BUT ALSO A METAPHOR FOR PROSTITUTES WHO USED TO OFFER THEIR SERVICES ON BOATS ALONG RIVERS IN OLD EDO.

HER CHARM REALLY SHINES THROUGH LIKE AT NO OTHER TIME!
AND THROUGH INCIDENTS LIKE THESE,
...

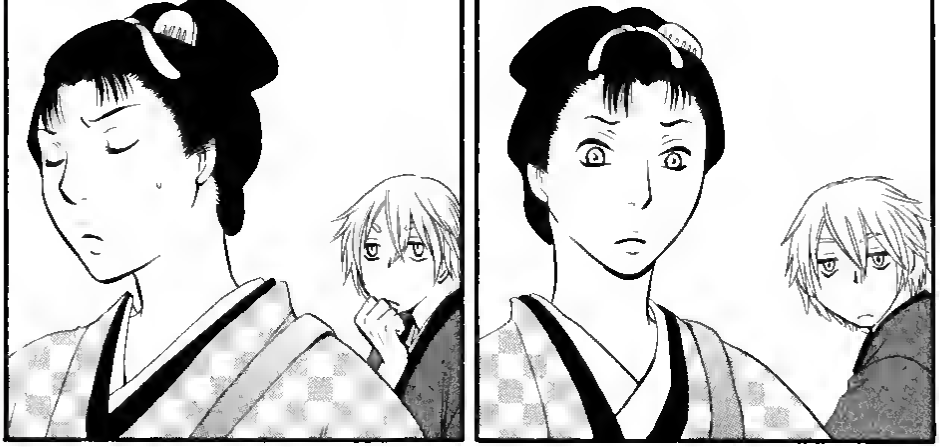
HER FACE AS CLEAR AS A BRIGHT POOL,
HER LIVELY ATTITUDE,
HERE TOO!
RIGHT AWAY!
OSHIMA! TEA PLEASE!

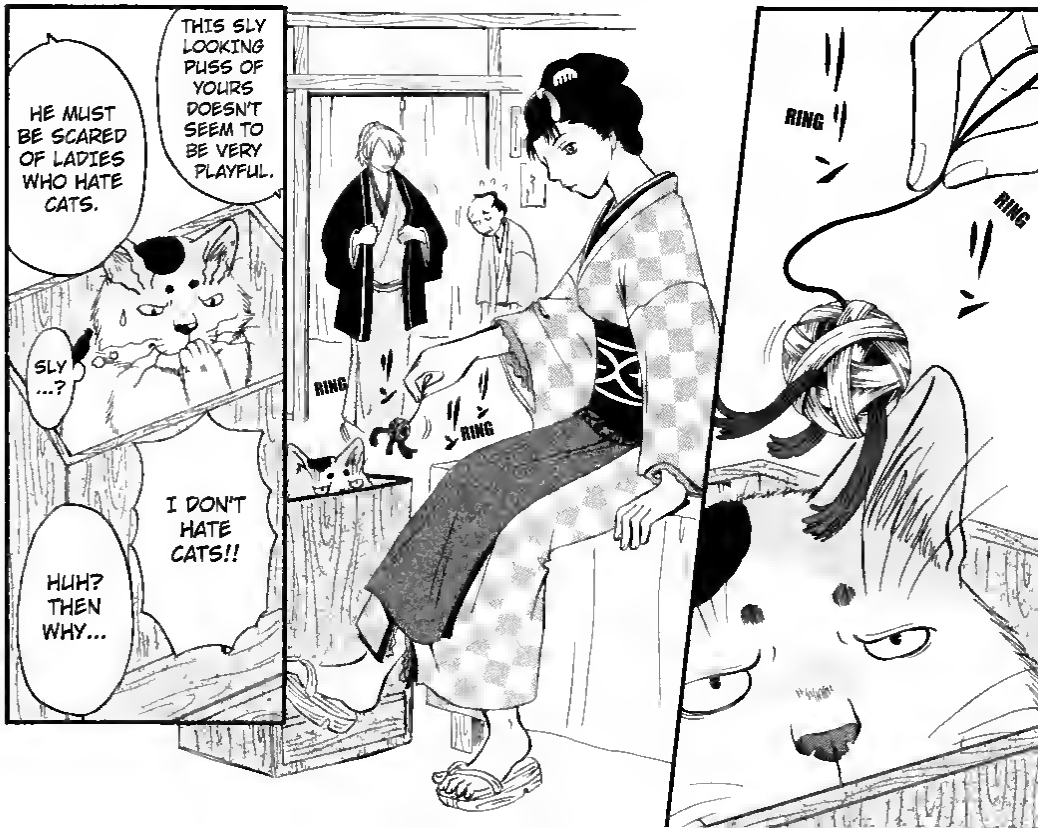
I WONDER ABOUT THAT...
FLIP
FLIP
IT REALLY IS!

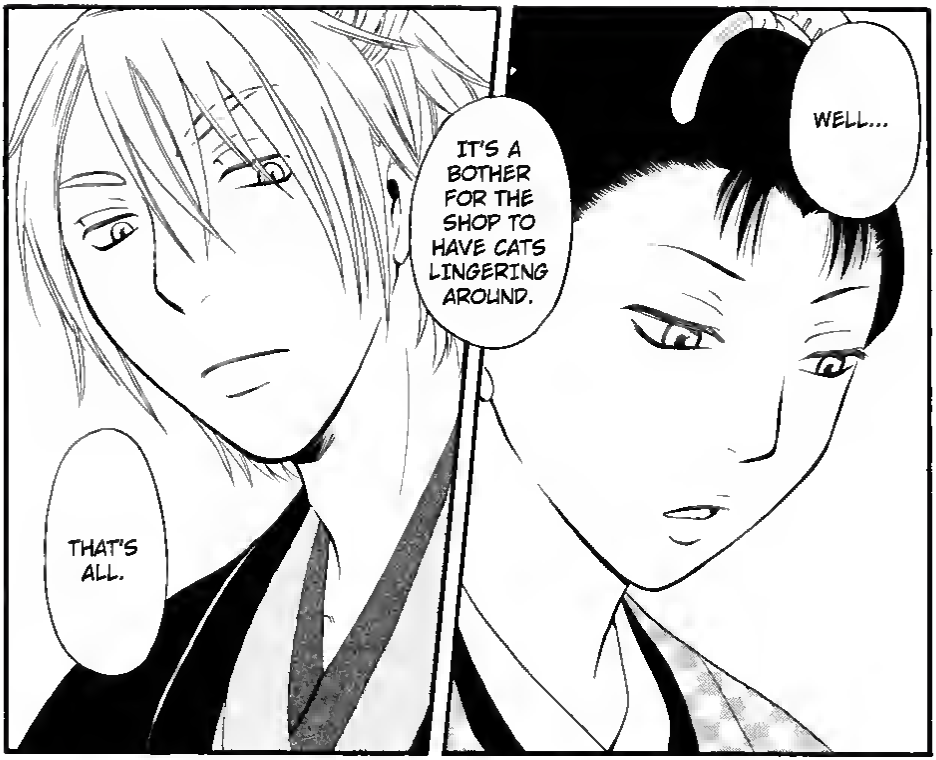

MEOW?

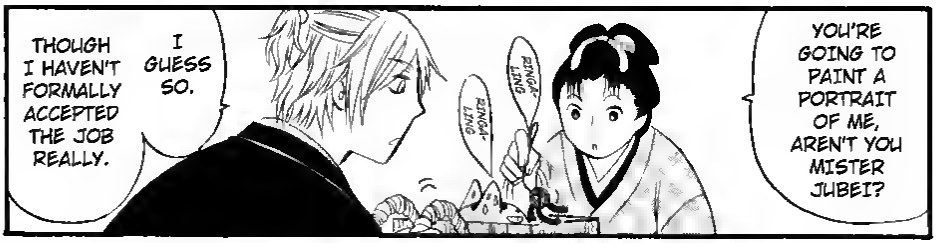

HAHA, DON'T MENTION IT!
YOUR VIEW ON THINGS REALLY TOUCHES ME.

IF IT'S ABOUT YOUR VIEW ON WOMEN, GO TO TALK ABOUT IT SOMEWHERE ELSE!
STARE
THERE'S THIS COURTESAN FROM KITASATO NAMED HANASUMO




THIS SLY LOOKING PUSS OF YOURS DOESN'T SEEM TO BE VERY PLAYFUL.
HE MUST BE SCARED OF LADIES WHO HATE CATS.
SLY ...?
I DON'T HATE CATS!!
HUH? THEN WHY...
RING
RING
RING
RING

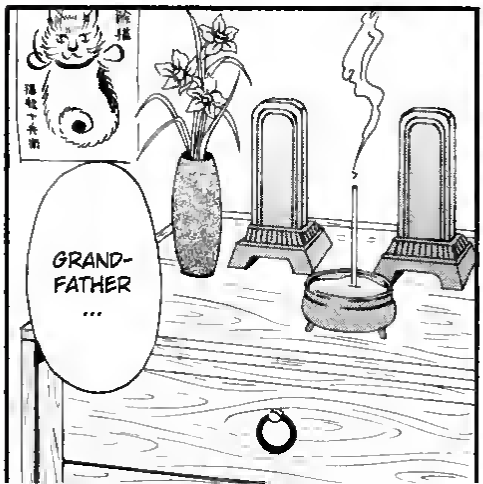

WELL...
IT'S A BOTHER FOR THE SHOP TO HAVE CATS LINGERING AROUND.
THAT'S ALL.

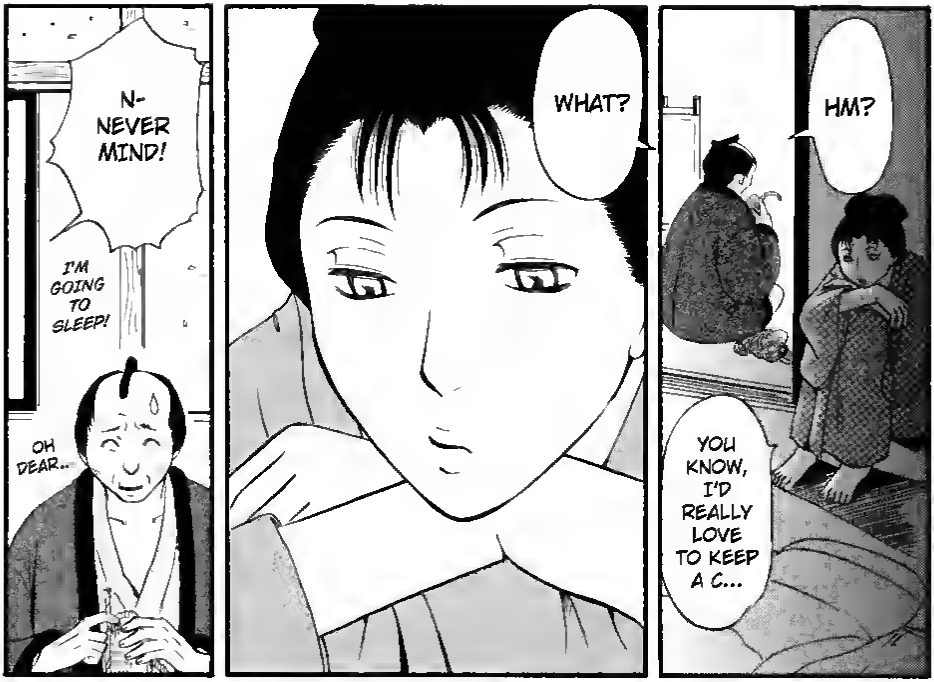

YOU'RE GOING TO PAINT A PORTRAIT OF ME, AREN'T YOU MISTER JUBEI?
RINGA-LING
RINGA-LING
I GUESS SO.
THOUGH I HAVEN'T FORMALLY ACCEPTED THE JOB REALLY.

WHY IS THAT?
GRIN
にかっ
ANYWAY, THIS CAT PAINTING IS MY PAYMENT FOR THE TEA. IT KEEPS AWAY THE MICE.
HUH?
A CAT?
FLOAT
ひらん
PUT IT UP WHEN YOU'VE GOT MICE.

MEOW !
ALSO, IT'D BE NICE IF YOU WOULDN'T BE SO HARSH ANYMORE TOWARDS THAT ONE CAT.

SHE'S GOING TO BE A MOTHER SOON.

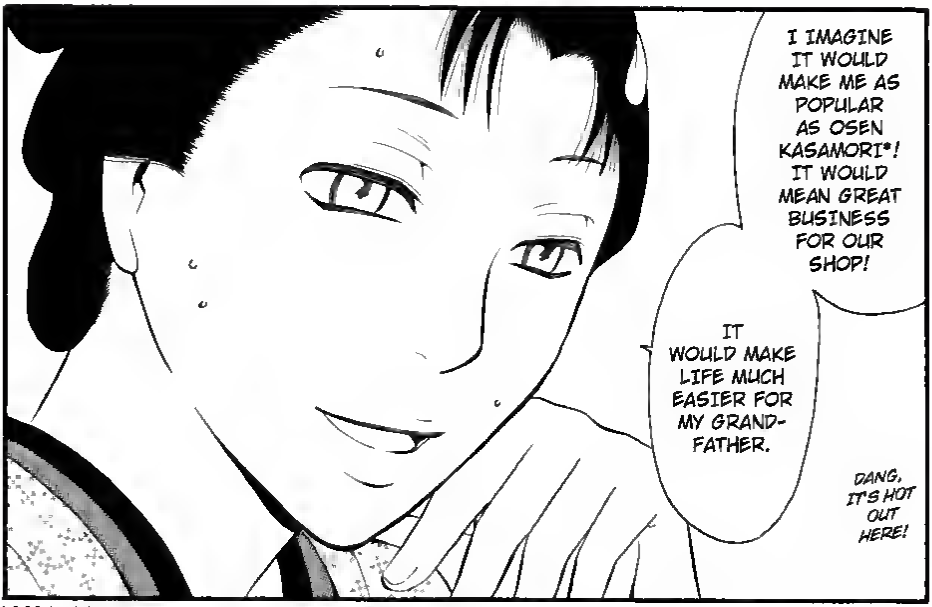

GRAND-FATHER ...



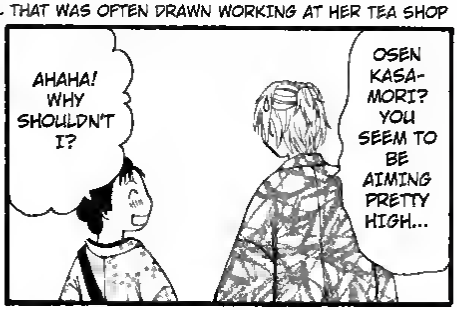
*TYPE OF SWEETS

MEOW?
HAVING YOUR OWN HOUSE AND ALL!
YOU SEEM TO BE DOING WELL FOR YOURSELF ALL OF A SUDDEN!

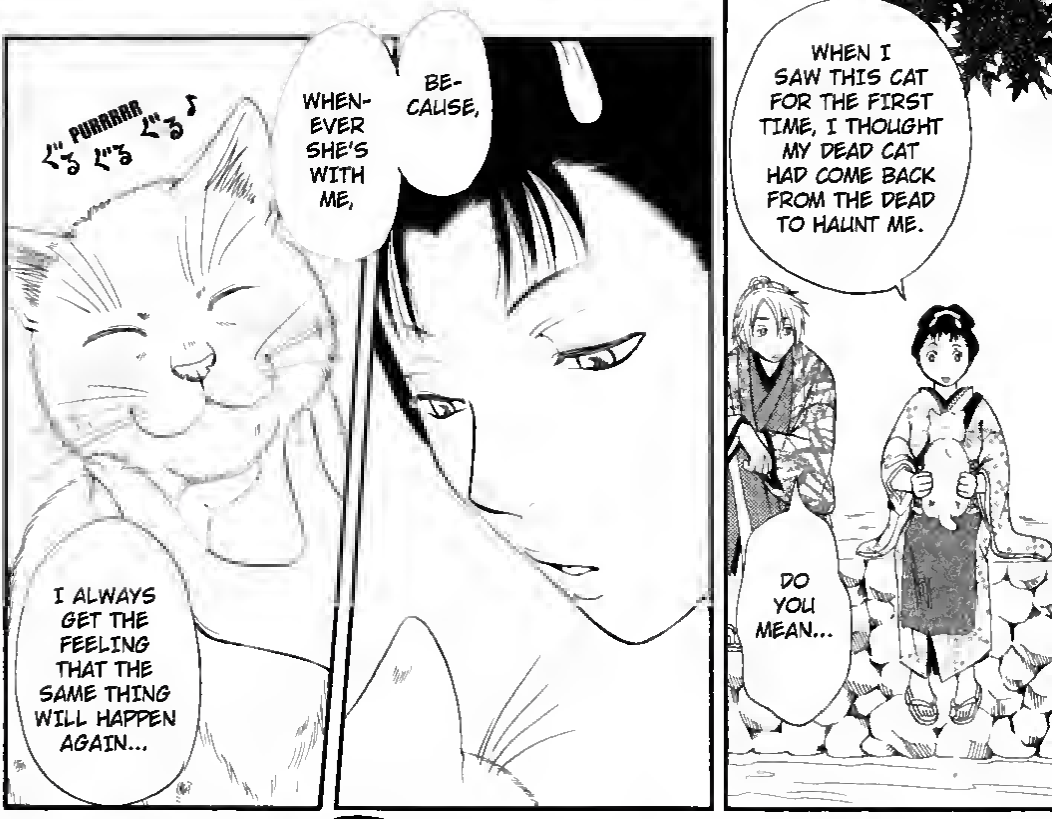
THE CAT PAINTER !!
OH!
MEOW !
DAMN
WHAT ABOUT OUR PROMISE, HUH??
HUH
ガシ
GRABBING
LET GO OF ME!
I RE-FUSE !!
ズル SLIDE
ズル SLIDE
ズル SLIDE
DO YOU REALLY ...
WANT A POR-TRAIT OF YOURSELF THAT BAD?
OF COURSE !
PAINT
PAINT
PAINT
PAINT


I IMAGINE IT WOULD MAKE ME AS POPULAR AS OSEN KASAMORI*! IT WOULD MEAN GREAT BUSINESS FOR OUR SHOP!
IT WOULD MAKE LIFE MUCH EASIER FOR MY GRAND-FATHER.
DANG, IT'S HOT OUT HERE!

*OSEN KASAMORI WAS A HIGHLY POPULAR UKIYOE MODEL THAT WAS OFTEN DRAWN WORKING AT HER TEA SHOP



THE CAT I WAS KEEPING UP TO THAT INCIDENT...
...WAS WHITE, JUST LIKE THIS ONE.
I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO SAVE HER.
SHE DIED IN THE FLAMES.
I KNEW SHE WAS RIGHT THERE IN THE FIRE, TRAPPED BY JUST A SINGLE PAPER DOOR.
COME ON, RUN!!

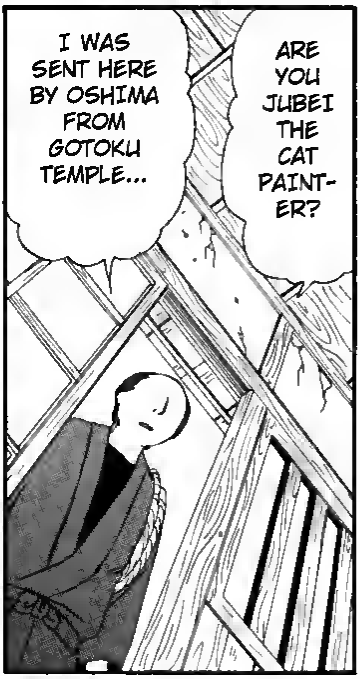

WHEN I SAW THIS CAT FOR THE FIRST TIME, I THOUGHT MY DEAD CAT HAD COME BACK FROM THE DEAD TO HAUNT ME.
DO YOU MEAN...
BE-CAUSE,
WHEN-EVER SHE'S WITH ME,
PURRRRR
I ALWAYS GET THE FEELING THAT THE SAME THING WILL HAPPEN AGAIN...

I'M JUST SO SCARED.
SQUEEZE
SQUEEZE
TELL ME...

HOW MANY KITTENS DO CATS USUALLY GIVE BIRTH TO?
WHO KNOWS? SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THREE AND FIVE, ISN'T IT?
BUT THIS ONE ISN'T SO YOUNG ANYMORE, SO THERE PROBABLY WON'T BE THAT MANY.
I SEE...
AH, I SHOULD NOT BE HERE.
OSHIMA'!
BY THE WAY, YOUR CAT PAINTING REALLY WORKS!
YOU MUST BE GOOD AT WHAT YOU DO, MISTER CAT PAINTER!
WE DON'T HAVE ANY MICE ANYMORE!
HERE.
CLACK CLACK

GOING ALREADY?
OH?
STEP STEP
MEOW!
WAG
WAG
YOU ...
YOU'D BETTER WATCH OVER YOUR-SELF.
AND BEAR SOME NICE AND HEALTHY KITTENS.
MEOW!
AH, DON'T FOLLOW ME!
MEOW
NITA?
AH, THIS MIGHT BE NEEDLESS ANXIETY FROM MY SIDE, BUT...

DOOR SIGN CAT PAINTINGS JUBEI



OH...
KAW
KAW
AH!
SORRY FOR HAVING YOU COME ALL THE WAY HERE!
KERCHUNK
BOTH THE MOTHER AND THE CHILD DIDN'T MAKE IT?

MEEW!
MEEW!
MEEW!!
BUT IF IT DOESN'T GET ANY MILK...
NO, THIS ONE KITTEN SURVIVED.
MEEW
MEEW
MEEW
COME.
HUH?
LET'S GO.
MEEW!

SNIF-FLE
W-WHERE TO?
JUST HURRY!
SIGN: CLAY POTS
IF I'D HAVE JUST KEPT HER IN THE HOUSE,
MAYBE THIS WOULD NOT HAVE...
BEARING CHILDREN CAN NEVER BE SEPARATE FROM PUTTING ONES LIFE AT RISK. THAT'S JUST WHAT REALITY IS LIKE.
IT WOULD HAVE ENDED UP JUST THE SAME!
ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S DONE AT AN OLDER AGE.
IN THAT ASPECT, PEOPLE AND ANIMALS ARE THE SAME.
OH? A LOVER'S QUARREL?
BUT ...!!
ぎゅっ
SQUEEZE

THE FACT THAT THERE'S AN END TO THIS LIFE,
...THAT'S NO ONE'S FAULT.
I'M NOT A KID! I CAN WALK ON MY OWN!
HEY, HEY! YOU'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY!
?
WHA
BLUSH
カ？

ANYBODY HOME?
HAVE YOU EVER FOUND THIS PLACE WITHOUT ANYONE HOME, JUBEI YOU IDIOT!!
I'M RUNNING OUT OF PATIENCE HERE!!
HM?
OSHIMA!
JUST TO BE SURE, WE FIRST ATTACH THE SMELL OF THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE.
WHA!!
RUB
RUB
AHA,
AS I THOUGHT, SHE'S GOT KITTENS NOW.
SHHH!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING??

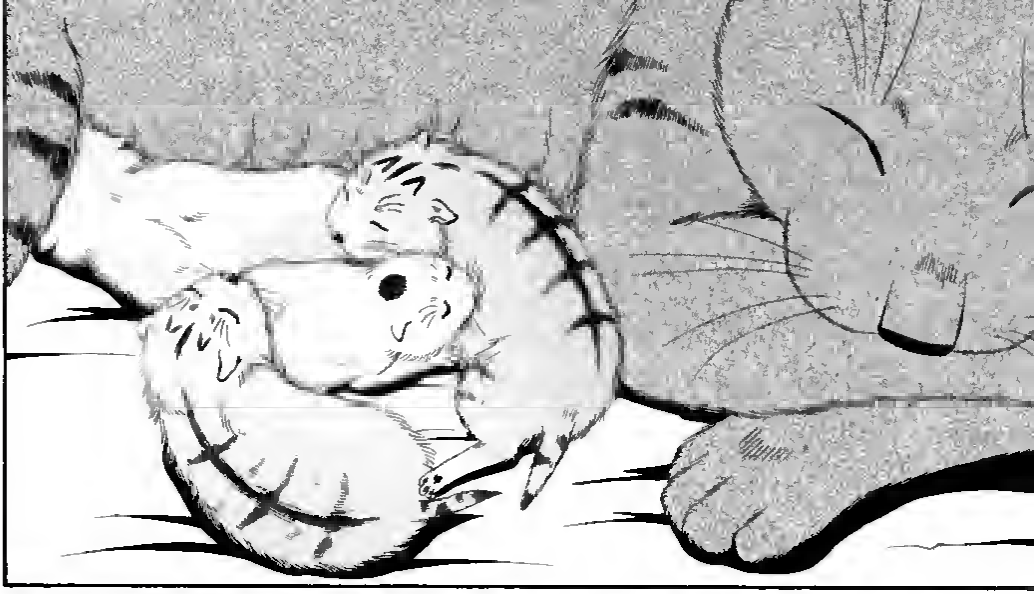
MEEW
MEEW
MEEW
EXCUSE ME HERE...
MEEW
MEEW
MEEW
MEEW
SNIFF
MEEW
SNIFF
MEEW
MEEW
OH

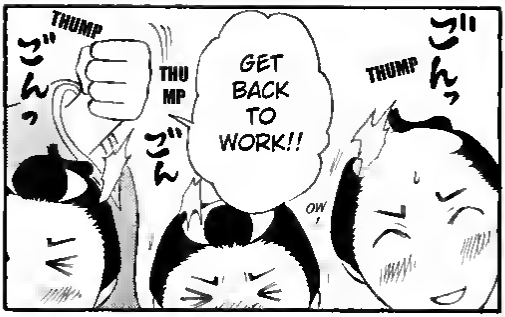
THERE YOU GO!
LICK
ざりっ
MEEE-!!

SUC-KLE
SUC-KLE

ホッ
OH

I'M SO GLAD...
THANK YOU!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!




THUMP
THU MP
GET BACK TO WORK!!
THUMP
OW!

WHAT A BEAUTY!!
WHOA, IT'S THE MAIDEN OF BENTEN!
STOP PUSHING!!
HEY YOU GUYS

OSHIMA, SHALL I WALK YOU HOME AGAIN?
CLATTER
SURE...
CLATTER

UMM...
WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A FEW OF THE OTHERS WITH YOU AS WELL?
IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS, IT'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE OF ITSELF!
SURE!
WHAHA-HAHA!
UMM... I DON'T THINK THAT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA...
MEOW!
WHEN THIS KITTEN HAS GROWN UP, WOULD YOU ALLOW ME TO TAKE IT IN AGAIN?
BUT, WOULD IT BE OKAY IF I CAME ALONG NOW AND THEN TO TAKE A LOOK AT MY KITTEN...?
YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME HERE!
COME AGAIN!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
AH-CHOO!

ゴロスケ
TWEET-TWOO
ホッホー
YEAH.
THOUGH IT'S SPRING NOW, IT'S STILL COLD AT NIGHT HUH?
CHOO
YOU KNOW,
EH?
I SAW ONE OF THE POR-TRAITS YOU PAINTED, JUBEI...
UGH !!
THAT GEE-ZER !!

IT LOOKED KINDA 'OFF'.
HOO
WELL, THANKS FOR LETTING ME KNOW!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL SEE TO IT THAT THEY SEND YOU SOMEONE ELSE WHO'S ACTUALLY GOOD AT PAINTING PEOPLE.
I DON'T WANT THAT!!
I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE DOING IT TO START WITH
HUH ?
YOU DON'T WANT IT ANY-MORE?
OF COURSE I STILL WANT IT!
AND I'LL HAVE IT!
BUT YOU KNOW,

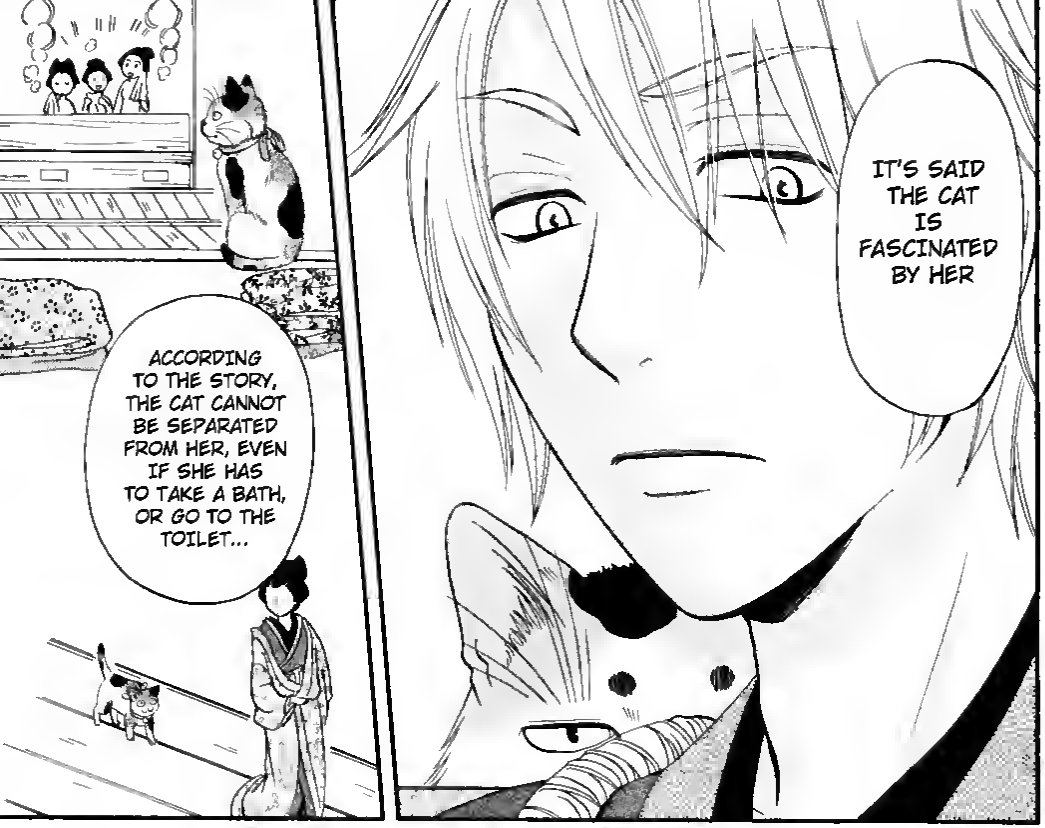
I WANT YOU TO BE THE ONE TO PAINT IT, JUBEI!
ANYWAY, IT'S ONLY A FEW MORE STEPS, SO I CAN GO ALONE FROM HERE.
OH, MY COAT ...!
I STILL HAVE TO MAKE A GRAVE FOR THE MOTHER
I'LL GIVE IT BACK TO YOU NEXT TIME!
CLACK CLACK
SEE YOU!
カコ CLACK
CLACK カっ
END OF CHAPTER 3
IF I REALLY HAVE TO PAINT A WOMAN
I'D PREFER TO DRAW ONE THAT'S A LITTLE BIT RIPER
...
HAH, HAD A TOUGH DAY AGAIN?
CHEER UP!
HERE HE
にひひ

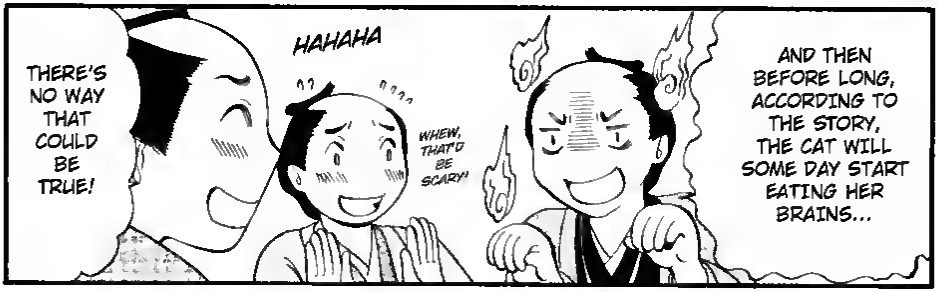
猫絵十兵衛
御伽草紙
ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし
CHAPTER IV
BROTHEL CAT
SANTARO

RINGA-LING
CLACK CLACK
カラカラ
RINGA-LING
RINGA-LING

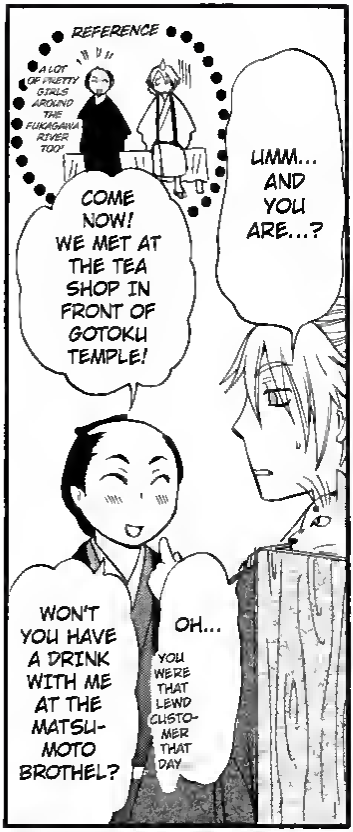
RINGA-LING
♪
WHOA, WHAT A FINE LADY.
IT'S HANAGUMO, A COURTESAN FROM THE MATSUMOTO BROTHEL.
WHY ARE THEY CARRY-ING THAT CAT??
SHE'S GOT A WAITING LIST OF HALF A YEAR!
WOW...
OH, IS SHE...
ガヤ
CHATTER
ガヤ
CHATTER
ワイ
CLAMOR
ワイ
CLAMOR

...THE HIGHLY RUMORED CAT COURTE-SAN?
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT. IT'S A MALE TORTOISE SHELL CAT.
HEHE... THERE'S SOMETHING VERY DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS CAT...
SHE'S A STRANGE COURTESAN THAT ALWAYS TAKES HER CAT WITH HER, EVEN IN BED!
YEAH SHE IS!
WHAT STORY?
I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BECAUSE OF THAT OR NOT, BUT I HEARD A STRANGE STORY ABOUT THAT CAT.
IT'S EXTREMELY RARE FOR SUCH A CAT TO EVEN BE BORN. LIKE ONE IN A THOUSAND.

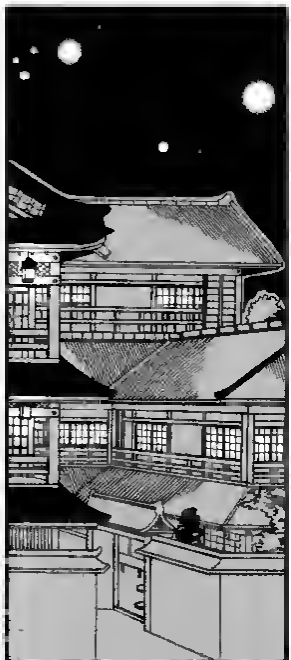

IT'S SAID THE CAT IS FASCINATED BY HER
ACCORDING TO THE STORY, THE CAT CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM HER, EVEN IF SHE HAS TO TAKE A BATH, OR GO TO THE TOILET...


THERE'S NO WAY THAT COULD BE TRUE!
HAHAHA
WHEW, THAT'D BE SCARY!
AND THEN BEFORE LONG, ACCORDING TO THE STORY, THE CAT WILL SOME DAY START EATING HER BRAINS...

OH!
MISTER JUBEI!
ドッキン
WELL, THAT'S NOT THE CASE, BUT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE THAT HE'S STARTED CHANGING INTO A NEKOMATA.
NITA,
AHA-HA-HA!
OH MAN...!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WHISPER
WHISPER


REFERENCE
A LOT OF PRETTY GIRLS AROUND THE FUKAGAWA RIVER TOO!
UMM... AND YOU ARE...?
COME NOW! WE MET AT THE TEA SHOP IN FRONT OF GOTOKU TEMPLE!
OH... YOU WERE THAT LEWD CUSTOMER THAT DAY
WON'T YOU HAVE A DRINK WITH ME AT THE MATSUMOTO BROTHEL?

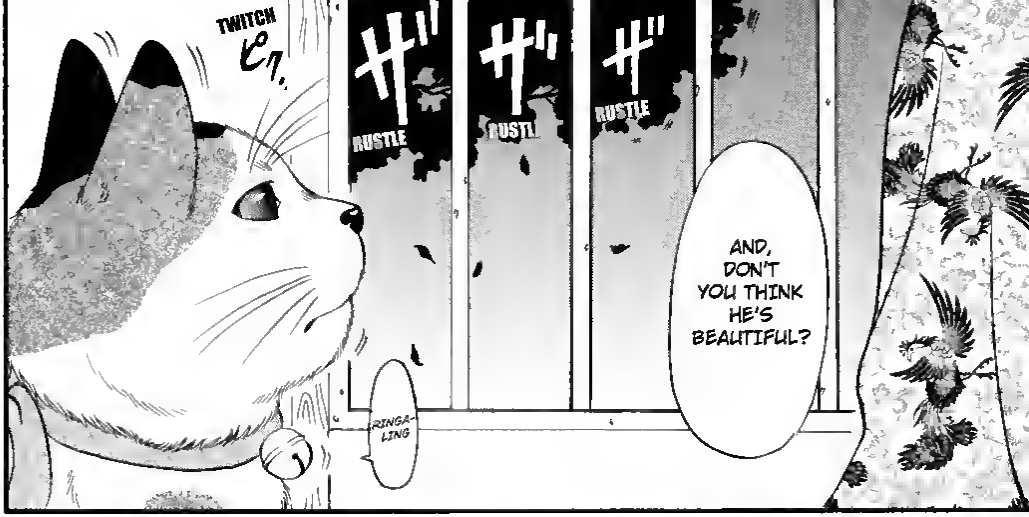
HOW UNEXPECTED TO SEE YOU HERE.

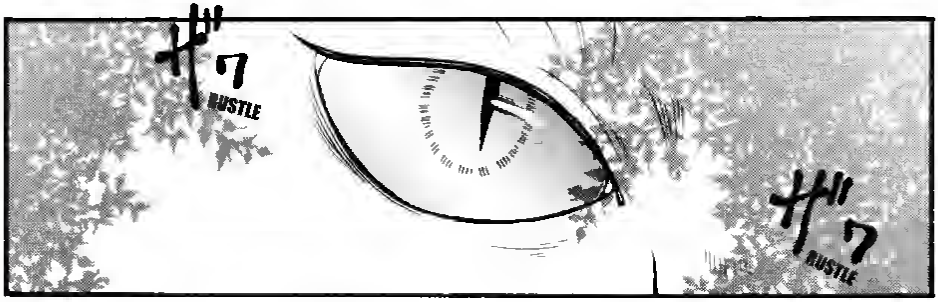


ARGH, THIS GUY...!!
HELP PULLING, GIRLS!
WE CAN ALWAYS TALK ABOUT CAT PAINTINGS!
ARE YOU SOME KIND OF CUSTOMER PULLER!!?
THAT'S A WEIRD SIGHT
HUH, WHAT'S GOING ON THERE?

THANKS, BUT NO THANKS!
WHAT, ARE YOU SERIOUS?
I'M HERE FOR WORK, AND I'M TIRED OF WOMEN ALREADY

CROWS PLAYING IN BETWEEN THE NIGHTLY CHERRY BLOSSOMS,
WHO'S THAT FIGURE HIDING IN THE SHADE OF THE CHERRY TREE?
AND THE SHY NEW BUDS OF THE WEEPING WILLOW, BEING SOFTLY CARESSED BY THE WIND,
OH, HOW GENTLY.
SANTARO IS REALLY SMART, YOU KNOW?
WOW, SO SHE REALLY IS ALWAYS WITH HER CAT!
ISN'T THAT TRUE, ISN'T THAT TRUE.
AHAHAHA!


TWITCH
ピク
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
AND, DON'T YOU THINK HE'S BEAUTIFUL?
RINGA-LING


RUSTLE
RUSTLE

THAT WOULD BE TRULY LOVELY, MISTER KOINO!
SO LET'S HAVE HIM DRAW SANTARO.
MISTER JUBEI IS REALLY GOOD AT DRAWING CATS,

IT'S A CAT, NOT A RACCOON!
THAT RACCOON OF YOURS IS THE SAME COLOR, BUT OH SO DIFFERENT!
ビッ
BURST
AHAHA
AHAHA!

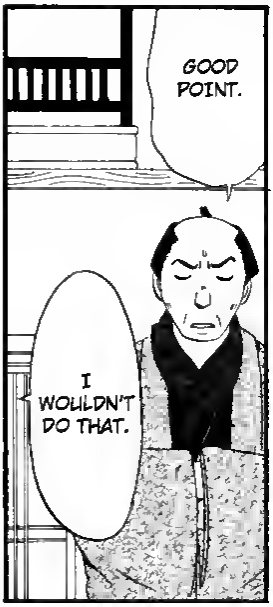
KOINO ??
I'VE HEARD THAT NAME...

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE THE FICTION WRITER HATSUKAZE KOINO!!
OH, YOU FINALLY REALIZED?
FUFUFU... CHUCKLE
OH MAN, I USED TO REALLY LOVE THE STOUT NOVELS OF HATSUKAZE,
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT HE'D BE SUCH A CHEAP ASS.
CHEAP ASS? HOW RUDE OF YOU...
OH, COME ON...
BUT NOW I THINK OF IT, HE HAD NO PRINCIPLES IN WRITING THOSE COURTESAN STORIES...

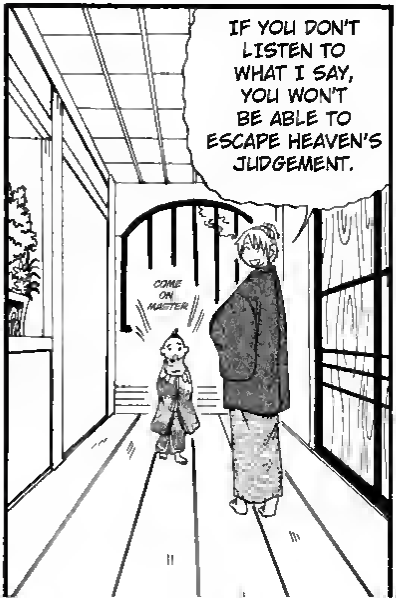
*WOODEN OR STONE BLOCK FOR BEATING CLOTH

SNEAKING IN THROUGH THE BACKDOOR AT NIGHT, THE BEATING RHYTHM OF A KINUTA*...
THE TOILET IS THIS WAY!
JEEZ, WHAT'S UP WITH HANA-GUMO...
BUT SANTARO IS REALLY WEIRD TOO.

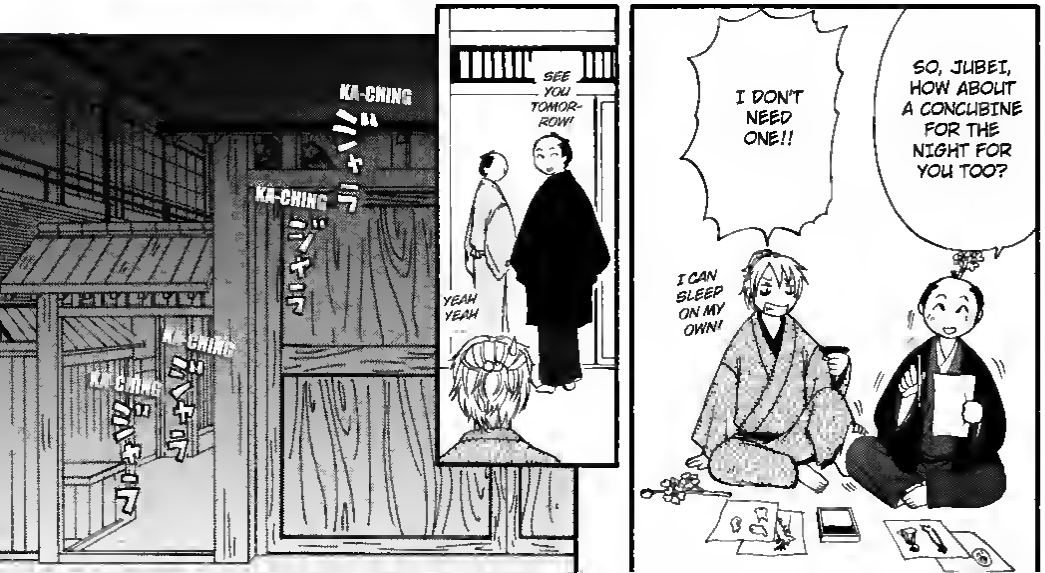
*CHINESE DEMON CAT THAT SUCKS THE LIFE ENERGY OUT OF PEOPLE.



WHENEVER SOMEONE TRIES TO SEPARATE HIM FROM HANAGUMO, HE GETS ANGRY AND STARTS BITING.
INDEED ...
I THINK IT'S RATHER CREEPY, ACTUALLY.



SO, MISTER KOINO,
WE'RE MAKING PREPARA-TIONS FOR THE NIGHT.
HUH? ALREADY?

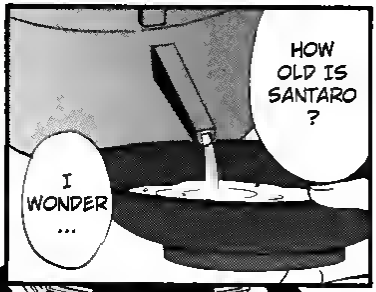

SO, JUBEI, HOW ABOUT A CONCUBINE FOR THE NIGHT FOR YOU TOO?
I DON'T NEED ONE!!
I CAN SLEEP ON MY OWN!
SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW!
YEAH YEAH
KA-CHING
KA-CHING
KA-CHING
KA-CHING

TAP TAP TAP
TAP TAP TAP
TAP TAP TAP
TAP TAP TAP
CHUCKLE
FIRE SAFETY CHECKING BRIGADE!
WE'LL BE CHECKING THE SECOND FLOOR!
WHAT A LOVELY FULL MOON NIGHT...
RINGA-LING
RINGA-LING

AT THE BLOSSOM VIEWING, NOT WITH ALL THE FANCY CATTY COURTESANS ...
BUT WITH A REAL CAT? QUITE INTERESTING
OH,
YOU'RE STILL AWAKE?
DIDN'T YOU MEAN TO SAY 'UNREFINED' INSTEAD OF INTER-ESTING?
DO YOU DISLIKE WOMEN OF MY TRADE?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I LOVE THEM!
BUT YOU KNOW,
ONCE IN A WHILE, A NIGHT LIKE THIS HAS ITS CHARM AS WELL.

AT THE TIME WHEN I WAS STILL AN APPRENTICE,
I FOUND HIM IN THE INNER GARDEN. HE LOOKED LIKE HE WAS STARVING....

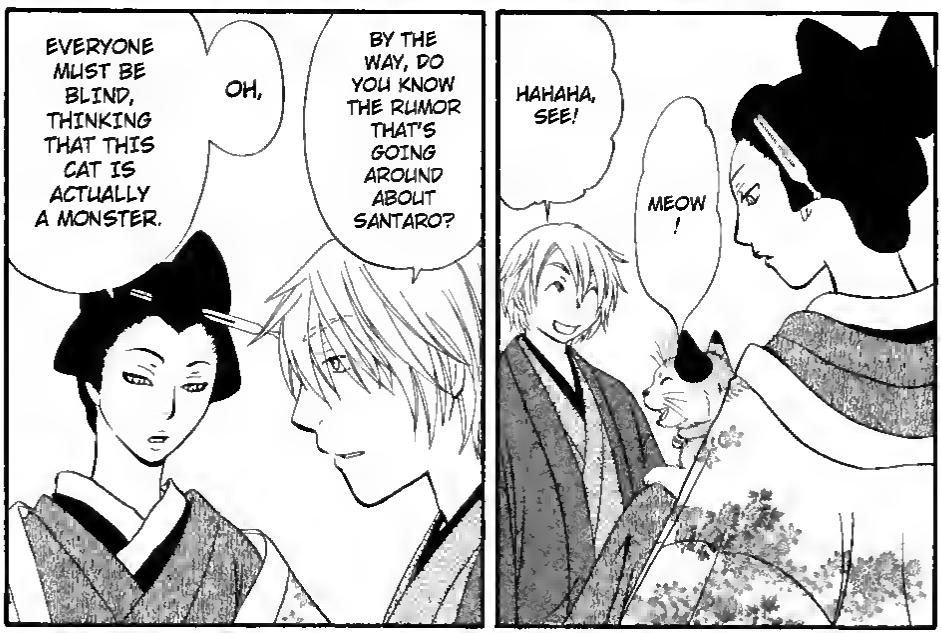
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
YOU SEEM TO BE AN UNUSUAL MAN.
YOU THINK SO?
PLEASE


HOW OLD IS SANTARO?
I WONDER...

BUT HE WASN'T PATHETICALLY CRYING FOR HELP.
I COULD FEEL A CERTAIN RADIANCE FROM HIS EYES.

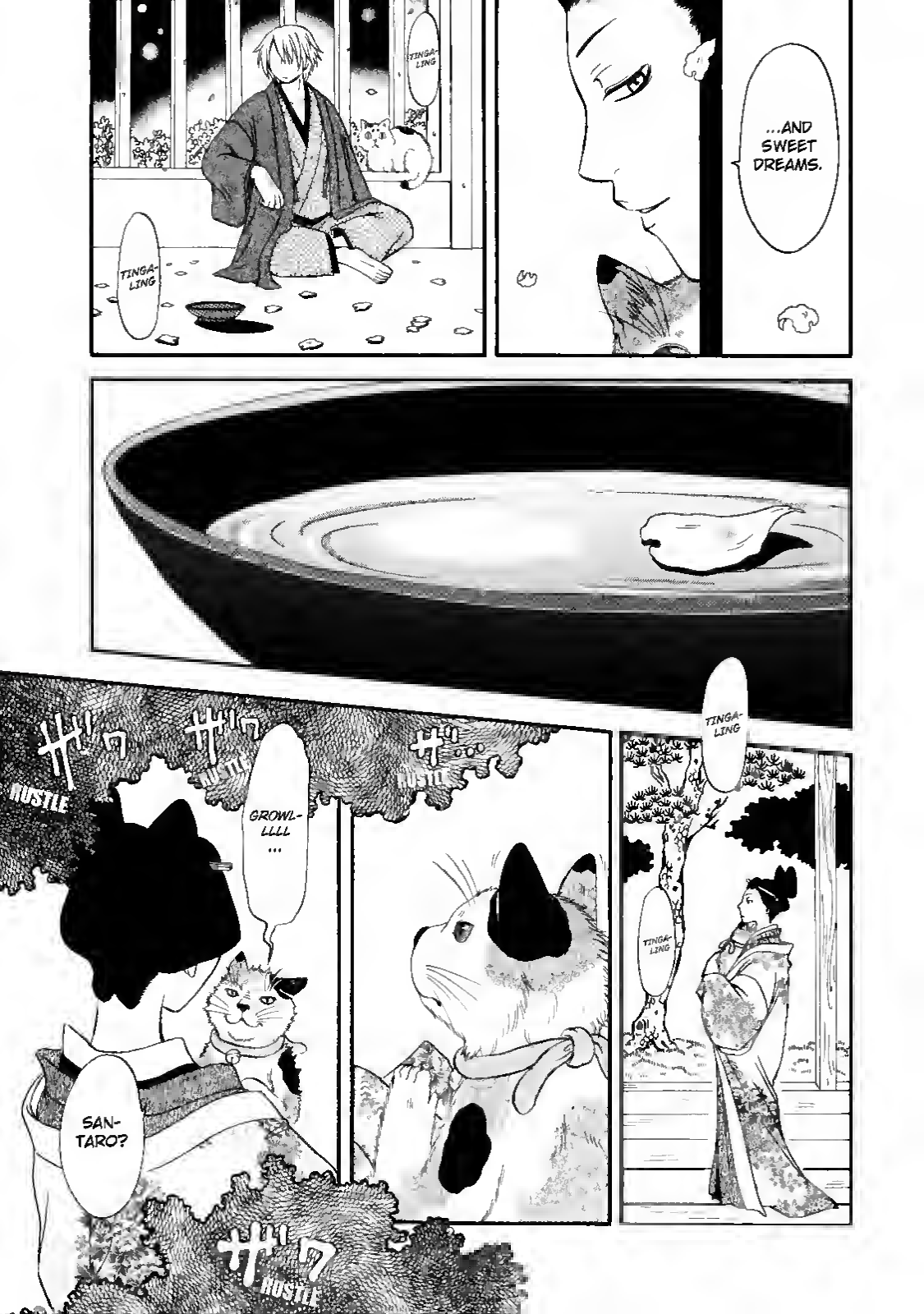
FINDING HIM THERE LIKE THAT, HE REMINDED ME OF MYSELF.
THINKING OUR MEETING MUST HAVE BEEN DESTINY, I ASKED MY TEACHING LADY AND THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE,
IF I COULD KEEP HER AS MY PET.
EXCUSE ME FOR TALKING FOR SO LONG ABOUT MYSELF.
THAT'S OKAY.

IF A MEETING BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE CAN FEEL LIKE DESTINY.
THERE'S NOTHING WEIRD ABOUT A DESTINED MEETING BETWEEN A PERSON AND A CAT.
DON'T YOU AGREE, SANTARO?
STROKE
ぱた
STROKE
ぱた

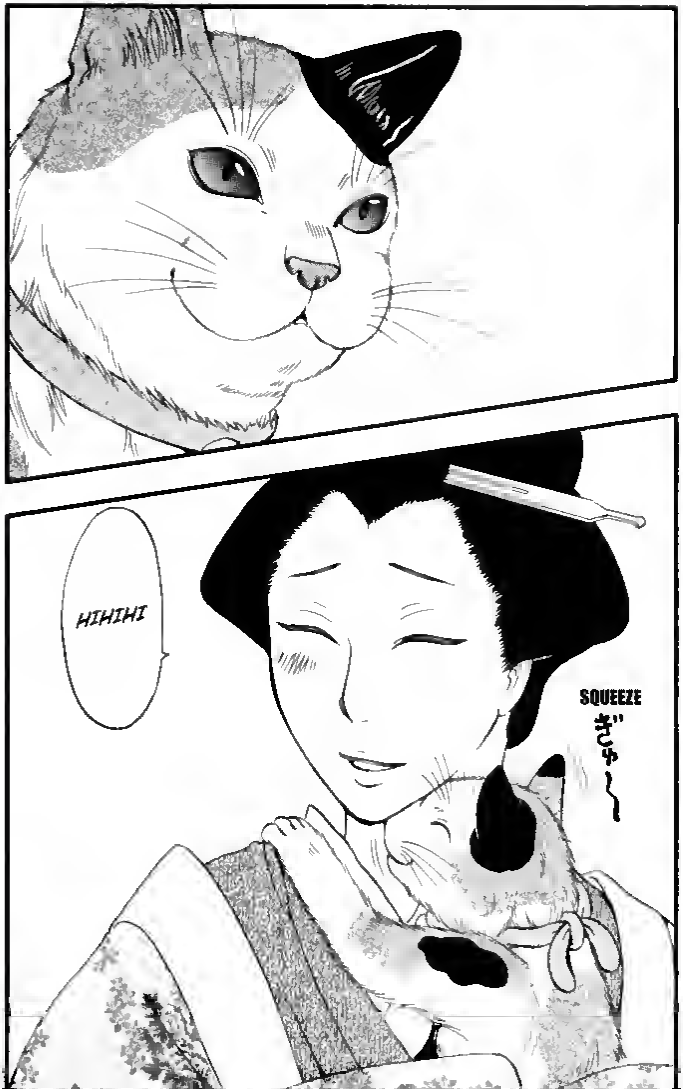

BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW THE RUMOR THAT'S GOING AROUND ABOUT SANTARO?
OH,
EVERYONE MUST BE BLIND, THINKING THAT THIS CAT IS ACTUALLY A MONSTER.
HAHAHA, SEE!
MEOW!

RUSTLE
WELL, IF DUE TO MY LACK OF VISION
I WERE TO BE KILLED AND EATEN,
THEN I WOULD ONLY SCATTER AFTER BLOOMING, IN MY LIFE AS A COURTESAN.

WHOOSH
I WOULDN'T HAVE ANY REGRETS!
WELL,
HAVE A GOOD NIGHT,


TINGA-LING
TINGA-LING
...AND SWEET DREAMS.
HUSTLE
HUSTLE
HUSTLE
GROWL-LLLL...
SAN-TARO?
TINGA-LING
TINGA-LING

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
IT'S ONLY THE RUSTLING OF THE LEAVES.


HIHIHI
SQUEEZE

I'M HERE, SO THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO BE AFRAID OF.

YOUR NOSE IS SO COLD!

BECAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO'S GOTTA PAY YOU FOR YOUR PAINTING.
WHY DID YOU COME WITH ME IN THE FIRST PLACE, MISTER HATSUKAZE?
IS IT ALRIGHT FOR YOU TO BE LAZING AROUND LIKE THIS?
IT'S ALMOST THE END OF THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS TOO.

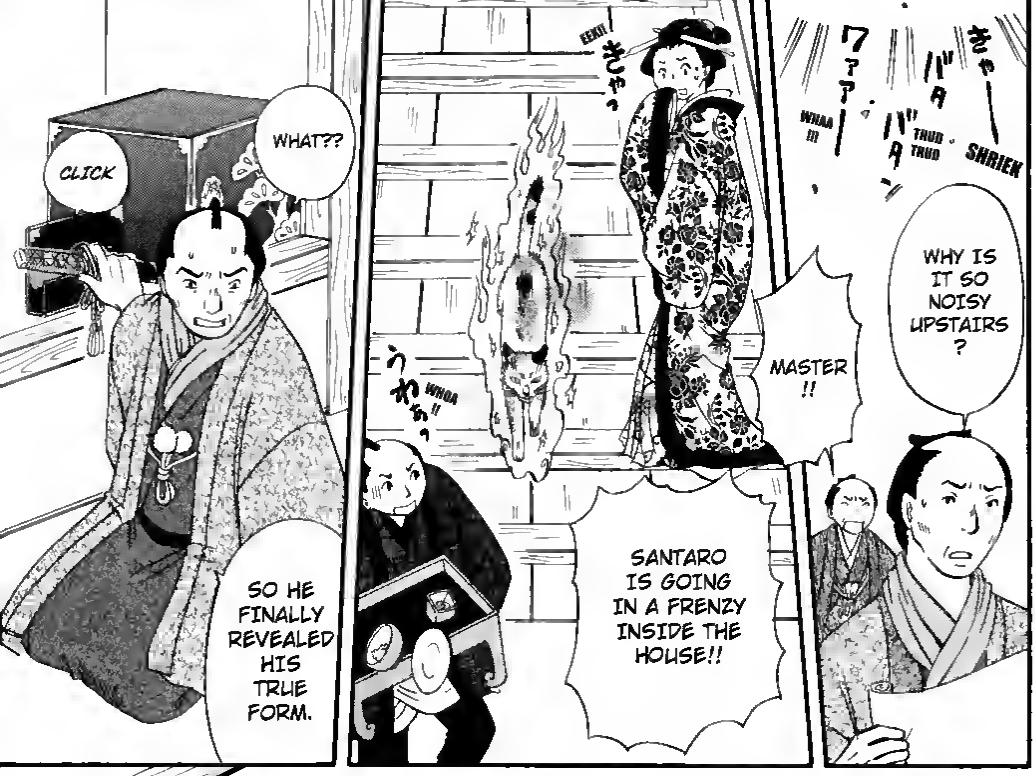
IS LADY HANAGUMO HERE?
YES!
THEY'LL ALL LOOK SO LOVELY AGAIN WITH THEIR HAIR CLEAN AND CLEAR!
TODAY'S THEIR HAIR WASHING DAY!

OH IT'S MISTER HATSU-KAZE!
DON'T BE SO HARSH
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT! GO HOME ALREADY!

YOU'RE SO COLD TOWARDS ME!
JEEZ, JUBEI...
NO, I'M THE ONE WHO ASKED FOR IT.
ME OW
I'M SORRY TO COME HERE ON SUCH A BUSY DAY.
YES?
HARU-NO?
パタ PATTER
パタ PATTER
MISTER CAT PAINTER! COME IN!
ARGH!
スタ THUD
スタ THUD
LADY, SHALL WE GO TO THE BATH?
YES.
MEOWW ...
SLIDE
LET THE PAINTER DRAW A NICE PAINTING OF YOU.
YOU'LL HAVE TO WATCH THE ROOM FOR ME, SANTARO.
MEOW !!

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
TWITCH
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
PSST, JUBEI...
SAN-TARO?
MEOW !!
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
MEOW !!
HANAGUMO WILL BE RIGHT BACK, OKAY?
MEOW !!
WHISPER WHISPER

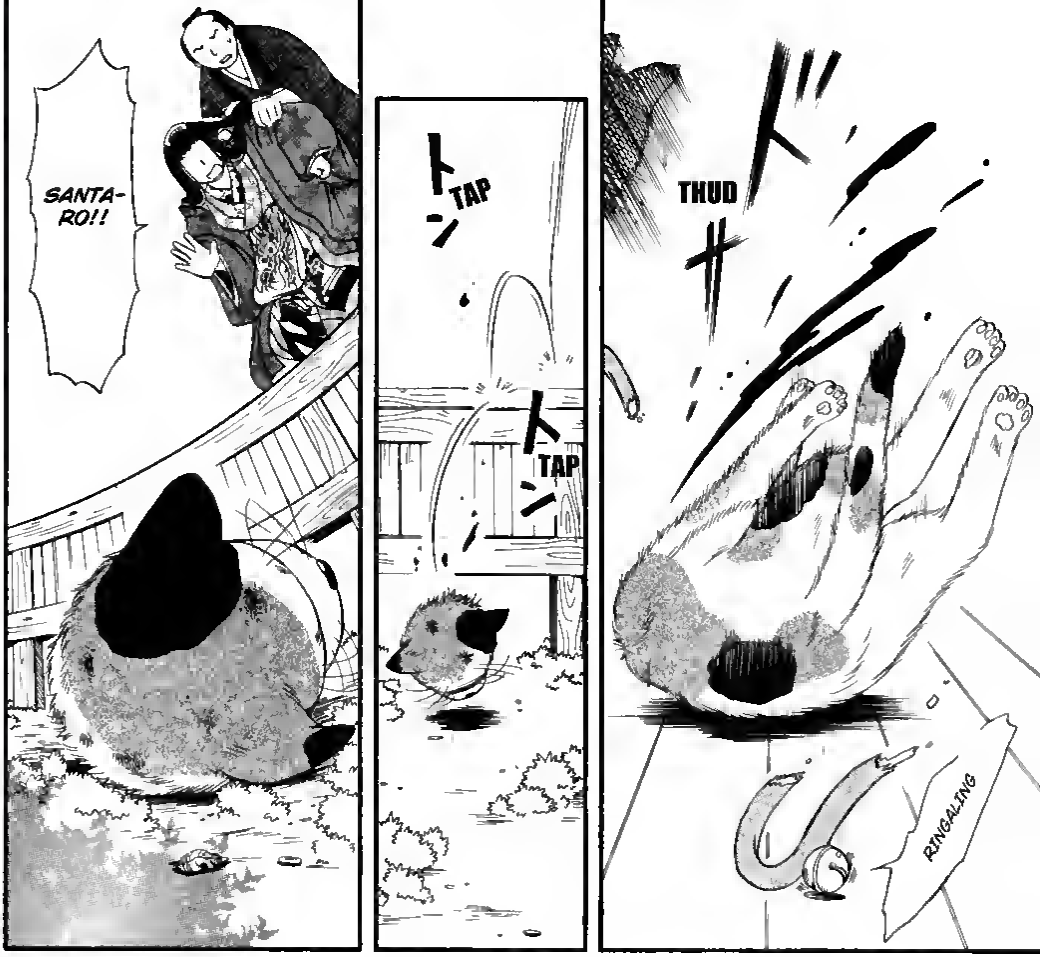
SLAM
SANTARO, YOU GO AHEAD!
IDIOT! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME EARLIER??
HUH ?
BUT, I COULD NOT SENSE IT UNTIL NOW...
SHRIEK
EEK !!
WHAT !?
SIZZLE
HISS
SIZZLE

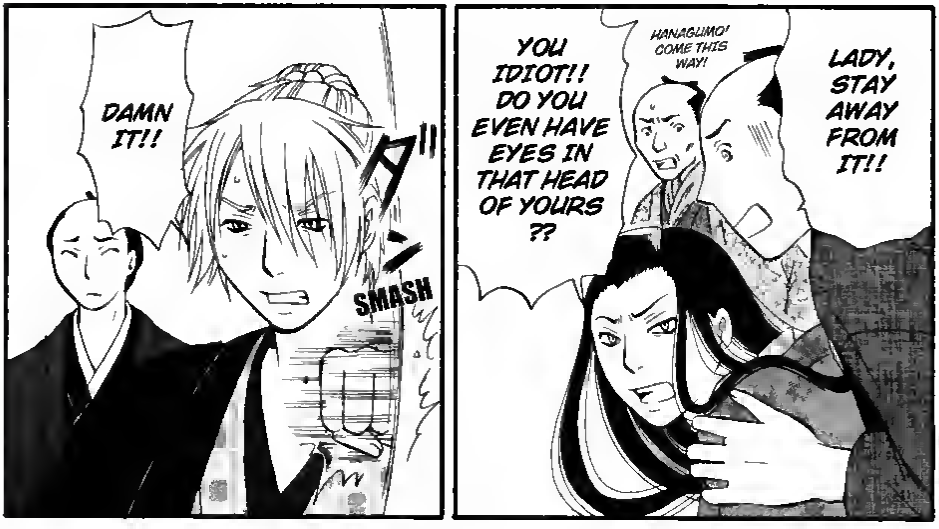

CLICK
WHAT??
SO HE FINALLY REVEALED HIS TRUE FORM.
EEKK!
きゃっ
うわぁっ
WHOA!!
SANTARO IS GOING IN A FRENZY INSIDE THE HOUSE!!
MASTER!!
WHAA!!!
ワァア!
THUD THUD
SHRIEK
WHY IS IT SO NOISY UPSTAIRS?

LADY!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SANTARO IS...

CHIDORI, STEP BACK.
BUT, LADY...
SIZZLE
ぱちん
SIZZLE
ばちち
NOW HURRY!
IT'S OKAY.
GROWL-LLLL...
GROWL!!
JUMP

SMASH
MON-
STER
!!
YOU
...
!!
STOP
!!
SLICE
RINGA-
LING
NO
...!!

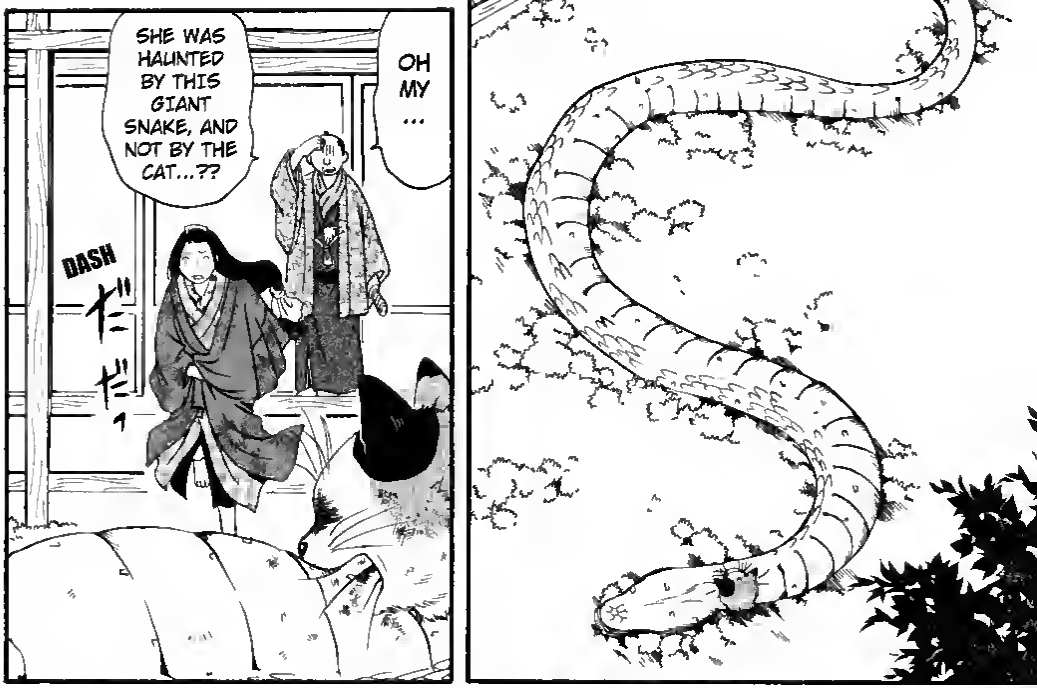

SANTA-RO!!
トン TAP
トン TAP
ドド THUD
RINGALING


DAMN IT!!
タン SMASH
YOU IDIOT!! DO YOU EVEN HAVE EYES IN THAT HEAD OF YOURS ??
HANAGUMO! COME THIS WAY!
LADY, STAY AWAY FROM IT!!

FLASH
RUSTLE
PSSSHH
PSHUU
GET BACK !!
WOOSH

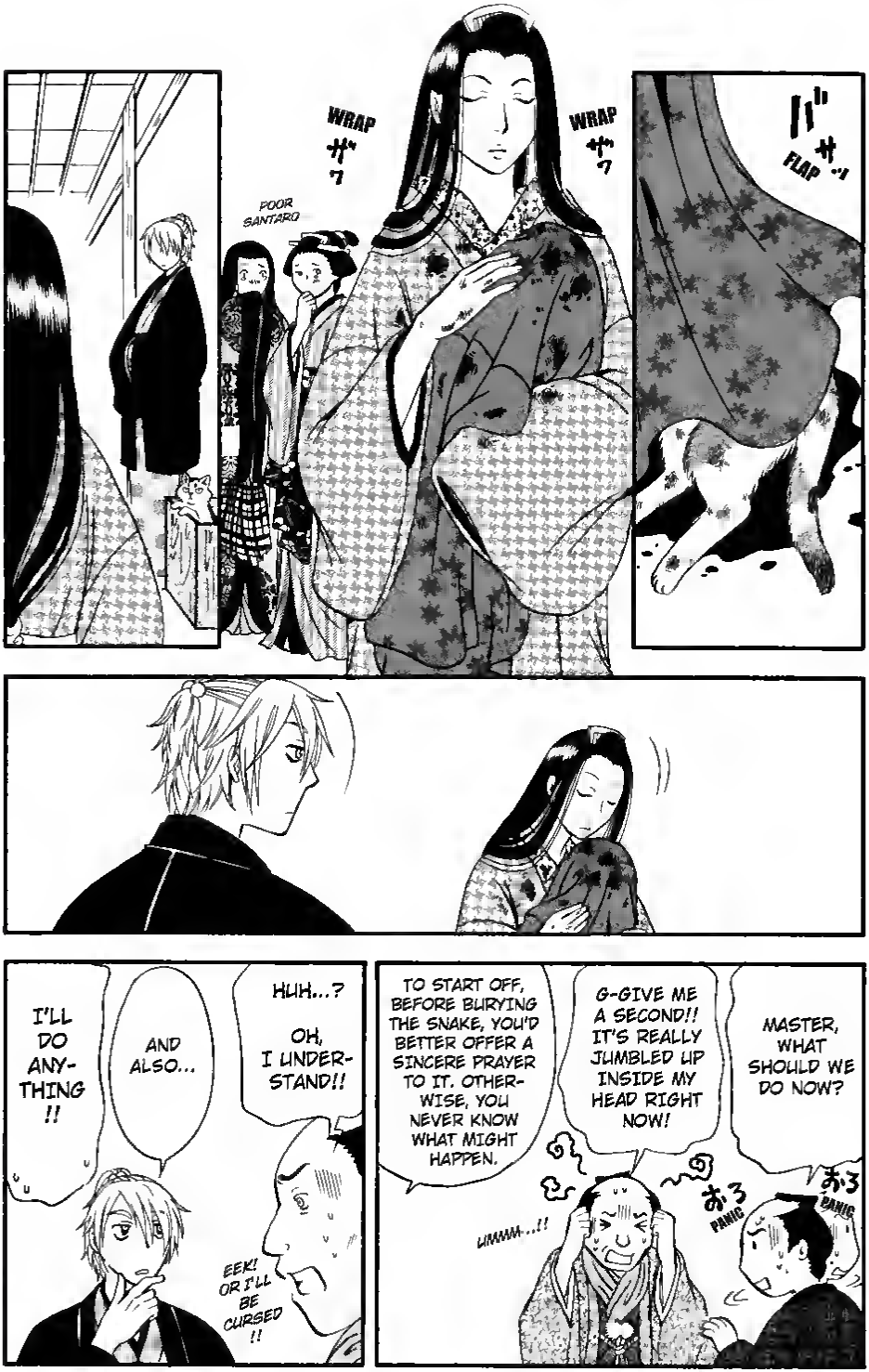
SHH-HHU-UU !!
WOOSH
WHAT ...?
HUH ?
YOU'RE THAT GUY FROM LAST TIME.
YOU'LL SEE.
SNAP
CRACK
SHH-USH-UU !!
CRACK
WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING HERE??
W-WHAT ...??
THUD
SNAP
DROP
CRACK

SHRIEK
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS??
うわぁっ
UWAHHH
バターン
SLAM
バタ
SLAM
バターン
SLAM
GROWLLL
パタ…ン
SLAM...
バタッ
SLAM
バタ
SLAM


OH MY ...
SHE WAS HAUNTED BY THIS GIANT SNAKE, AND NOT BY THE CAT...??
DASH
ダダダ

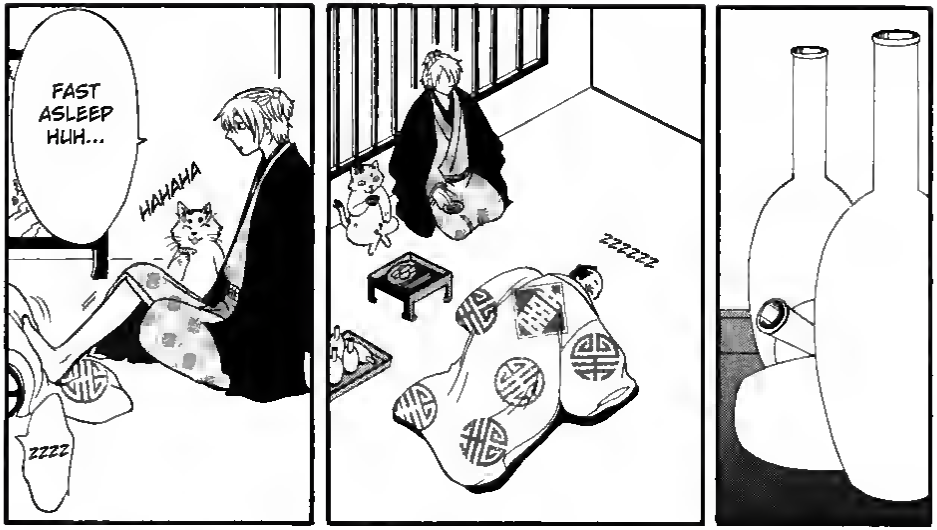
LET IT GO!!
SANTARO!! THAT'S ENOUGH!!
SO...
I'M SAFE AND WELL!!

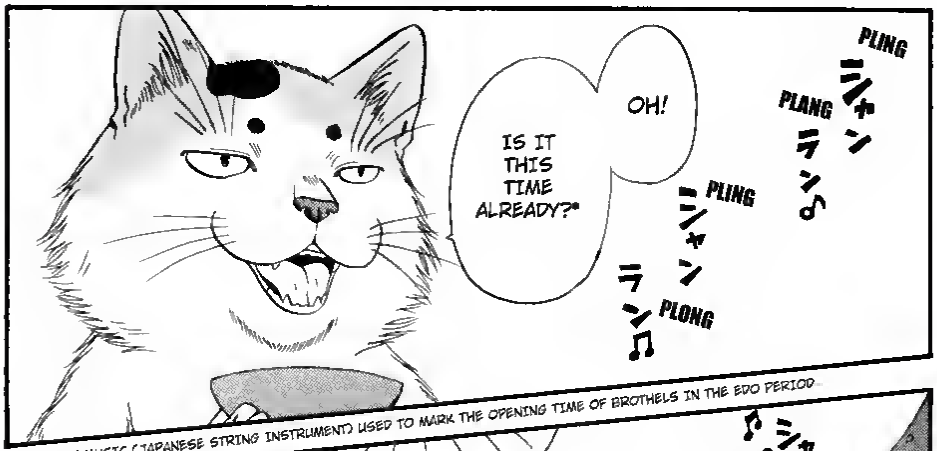
IT'S AS IF YOU'RE SMILING!
ROLL
AH ...
LOOK AT THAT LITTLE FACE OF YOURS ...


WRAP
ザッ
WRAP
ザッ
POOR SANTARO
バサッ
FLAP
MASTER, WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW?
G-GIVE ME A SECOND!! IT'S REALLY JUMBLED UP INSIDE MY HEAD RIGHT NOW!
TO START OFF, BEFORE BURYING THE SNAKE, YOU'D BETTER OFFER A SINCERE PRAYER TO IT. OTHERWISE, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.
UMMMM...!!
おろ
PANIC
おろ
PANIC
HUH...?
OH, I UNDERSTAND!!
AND ALSO...
I'LL DO ANYTHING!!
EEK! OR I'LL BE CURSED!!

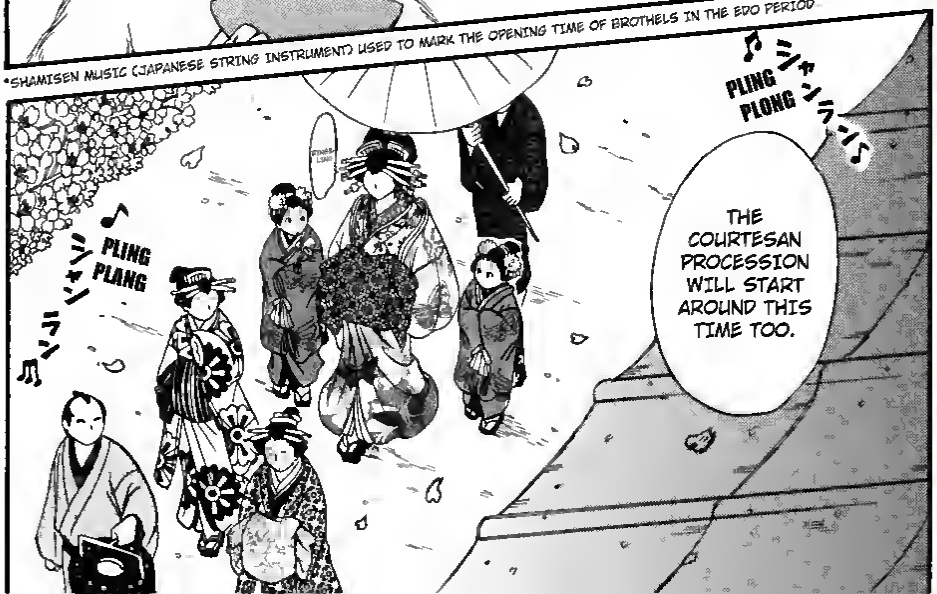
YOU SHOULD ALLOW HANAGUMO SOME TIME ON HER OWN.
HUH?
THERE MUST BE...
...SOME THINGS THAT SHE CAN'T EXPRESS WITH OTHER PEOPLE AROUND.

BYE NOW.
IT MUST BE TOUGH...
A WORLD LIKE THIS WHERE YOU HAVE TO BE TOUGH AND HOLD UP A FAKE FACE...
I'M IN QUITE A TEMPER NOW, SO I'M GOING TO GET A DRINK, AND GO TO SLEEP.
DON'T DARE TO FOLLOW ME!
OH, JUBEI, WHERE WILL YOU BE HEADING NOW?
COME AGAIN
ALL RIGHT, BUT BE PREPARED TO HAVE ALL YOUR MONEY DRUNK UP.
HA-HAHA!!
SOUNDS WONDERFUL!!
IT'LL BE MY TREAT! ♪
TWITCH ぴくり
TWITCH ぴく
YOU'RE PISSING ME OFF EVEN MORE!!
AND THE STAFF LADY IS REALLY HOT!
OH, IN THAT CASE, I KNOW OF A GOOD PLACE!



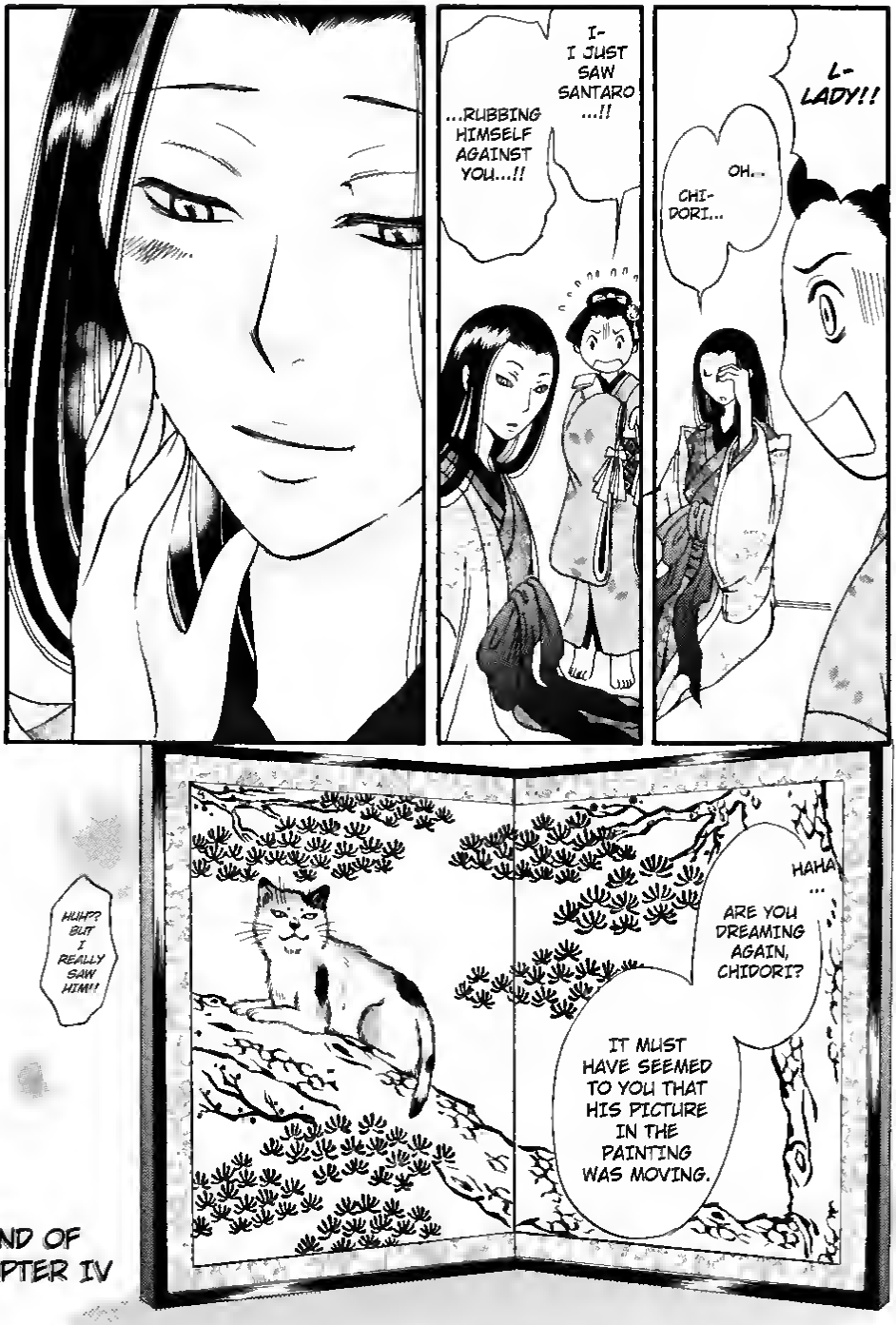


*SHAMISEN MUSIC (JAPANESE STRING INSTRUMENT) USED TO MARK THE OPENING TIME OF BROTHELS IN THE EDO PERIOD



RINGA-LING...
DID YOU FALL IN LOVE, JUBEI?
DON'T BE FOOLISH.
WHAT A WOMAN...
NOW THAT'S A SURPRISE!
WHY DIDN'T SHE GET SOME REST??

THERE'S A LETTER FOR YOU!
LADY!
SLIP
スウッ


L-LADY!!
OH... CHI-DORI...
I- I JUST SAW SANTARO ...!!
...RUBBING HIMSELF AGAINST YOU...!!
HAHA... ARE YOU DREAMING AGAIN, CHIDORI?
IT MUST HAVE SEEMED TO YOU THAT HIS PICTURE IN THE PAINTING WAS MOVING.
HUH?? BUT I REALLY SAW HIM!!

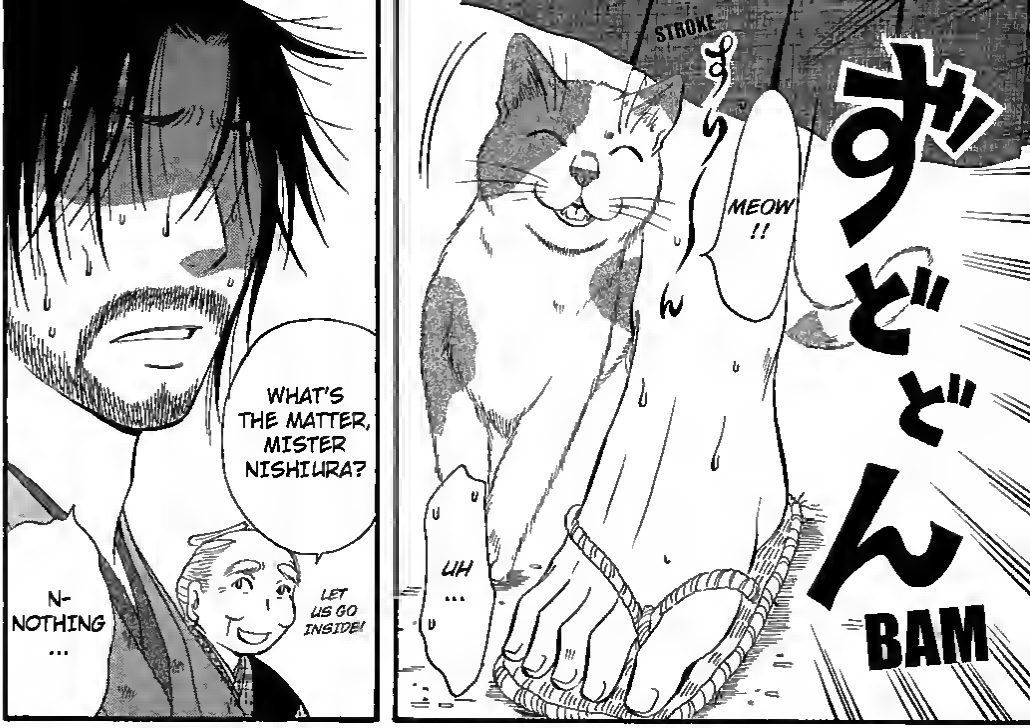
END OF CHAPTER IV

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし
猫絵十兵衛
御伽草紙
EDO NEKOE
JUBEI
OTOGIZOSHI
CHAPTER V
FELINOPHOBIA

*A BIG HOUSE DESIGNED FOR A COMMUNITY OF SEVERAL FAMILIES TO LIVE TOGETHER.

YOU SEE, MISTER NISHIURA?
THIS IS MIKAZA NAGAYA*.
AHA-HAHA!!
AND YOU KNOW AT OUR INN
COME ON, HAVE SOME!!
MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE THE PEOPLE ARE SO NICE HERE,
BUT THIS PLACE ATTRACTS LOADS OF CATS.
THAT'S WHY EVERYONE CALLS THIS NAGAYA...

BAM
どー
ん。
CAT-TOWN NAGAYA!
ME-OW !!
BAM
どー
どん
B-BAM
MEOW !!
MEOW !

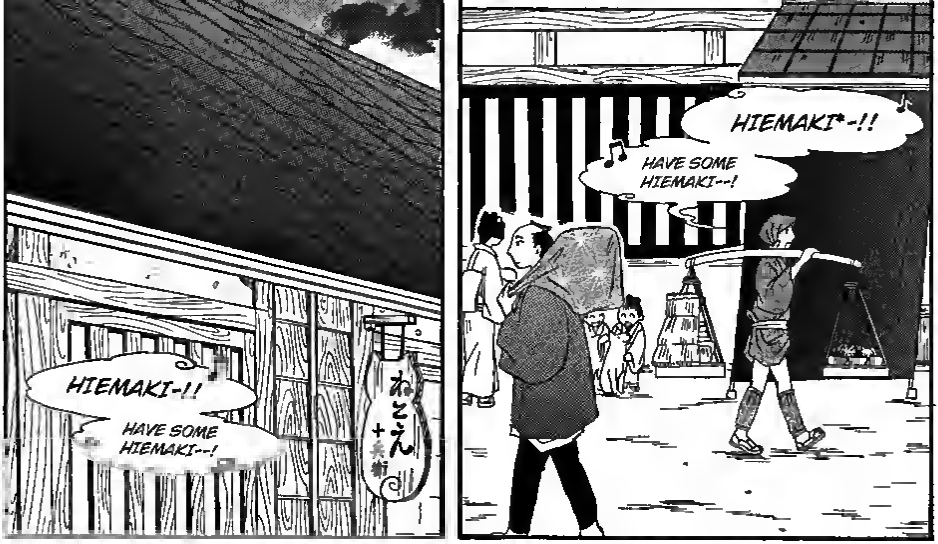

WHAT'S THE MATTER, MISTER NISHIURA?
N-NOTHING ...
LET US GO INSIDE!
STROKE
すぅ
MEOW !!
UH ...
すどどん
BAM

STAGGER
よろ
よろ
STAG-GER
HAHAHA
HE'S MOVING INTO THE HOUSE NEXT TO MISTER JUBEI.
HE LOOKS LIKE A BEAR!
GRAND-FATHER, WHO'S THIS LARGE SAMURAI YOU'VE BROUGHT WITH YOU?
HMM?
HIS NAME IS YASABURO NISHIURA!

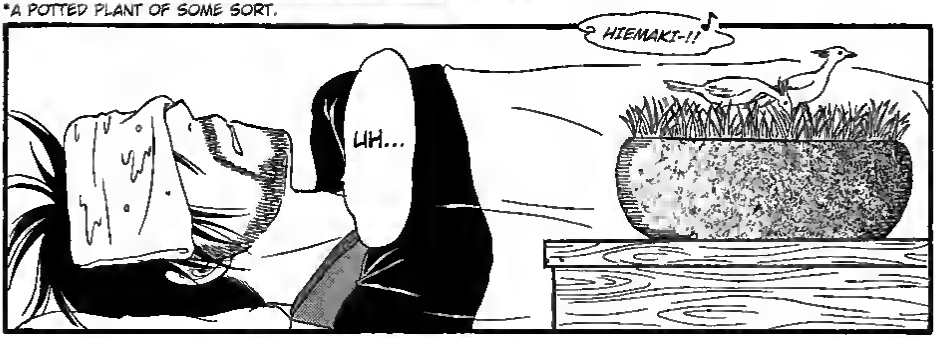
DOOR SIGN:
JUBEI CAT PAINTINGS

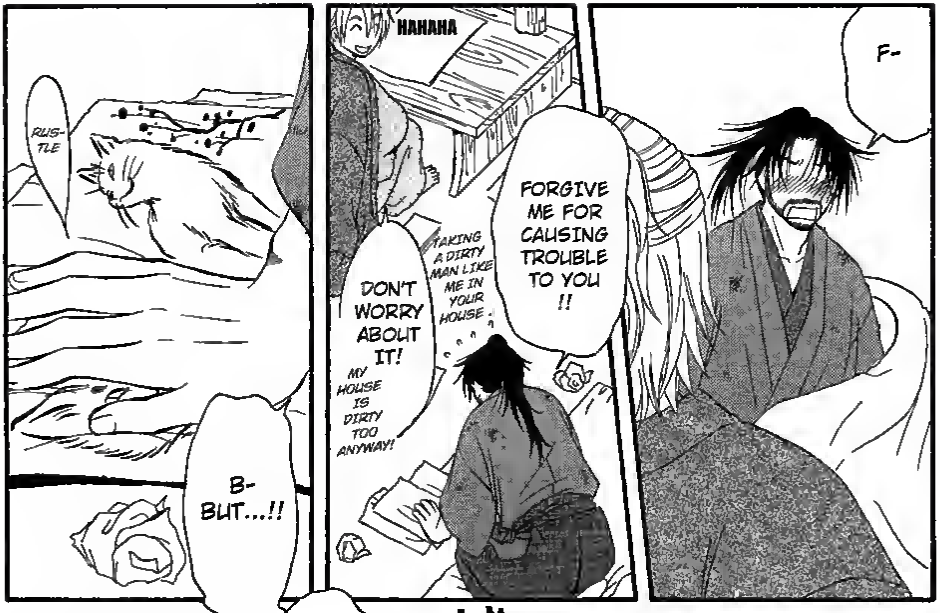
RATTLE
カ〃ラッ
WHAT'S GOING ON??
AN EARTH-QUAKE ??

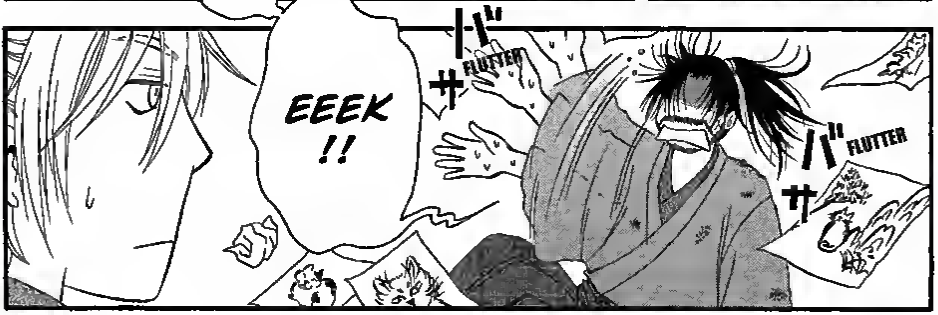
MR. NISHI-URA!!
SUN-STR-OKE ?
OH, NOT AN EARTHQUAKE...
ME-OW!
BUT, IT'S NOT EVEN SUM-MER YET...
IT'S A BEAR!!



*A POTTED PLANT OF SOME SORT.



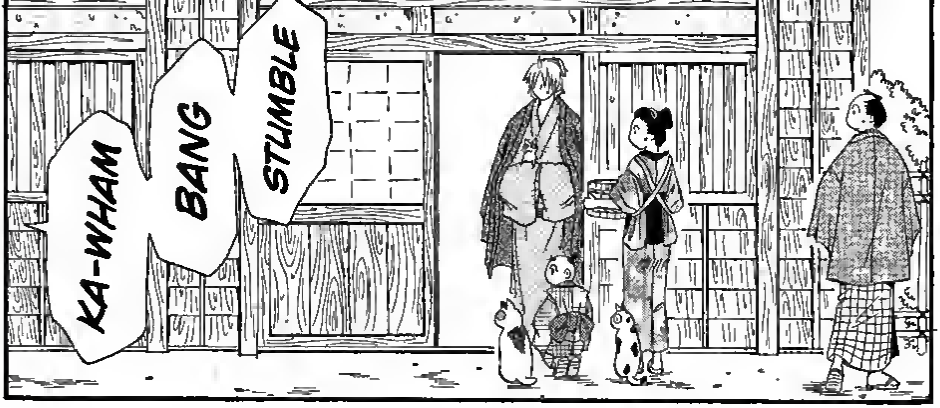

F-
HAHAHA
FORGIVE ME FOR CAUSING TROUBLE TO YOU !!
TAKING A DIRTY MAN LIKE ME IN YOUR HOUSE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!
MY HOUSE IS DIRTY TOO ANYWAY!
RUSTLE
B-BUT...!!

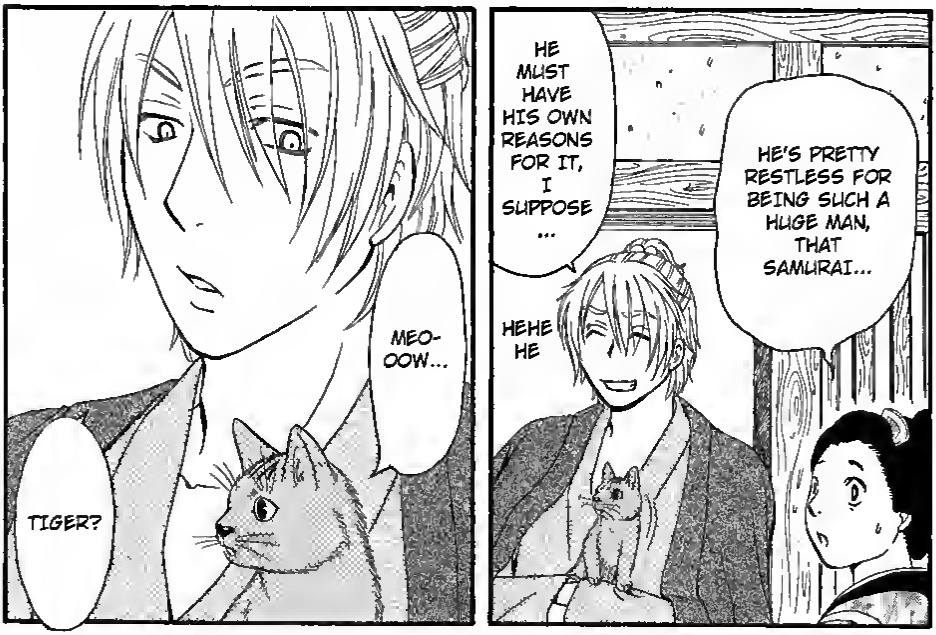

EEEK !!
FLUTTER
FLUTTER

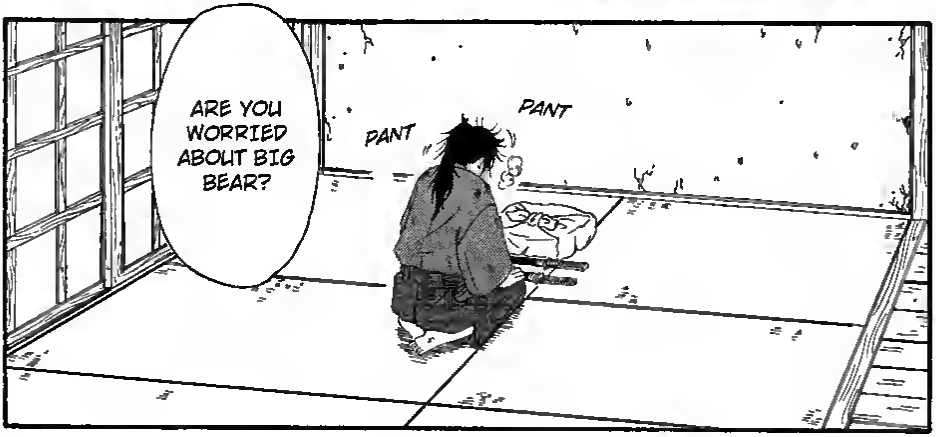
I'LL COME BACK ANOTHER TIME FOR A MORE FORMAL GREETING!
BUT I'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE MYSELF NOW!!
FLAP
わた
わた
FLAP

MIGHT YOU BE...
MEOW !!
FLINCH

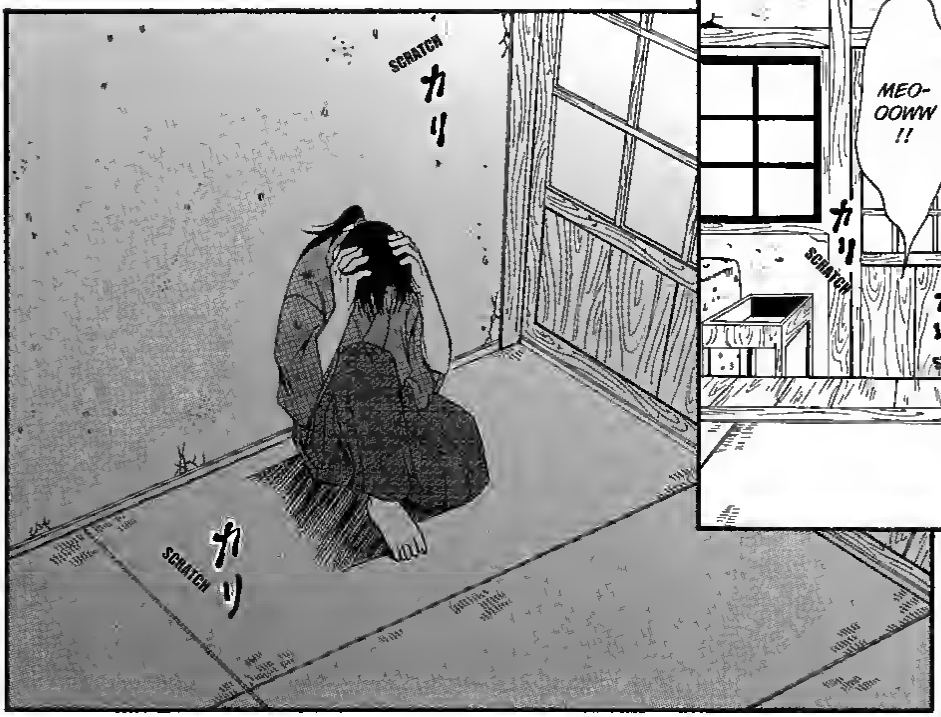
THAT WAS A BIG SOUND!!
OH, ARE YOU OKAY?
UGH...!! YEAH...
ごぃん
SLAM
HURTS?
GRMBL !!!

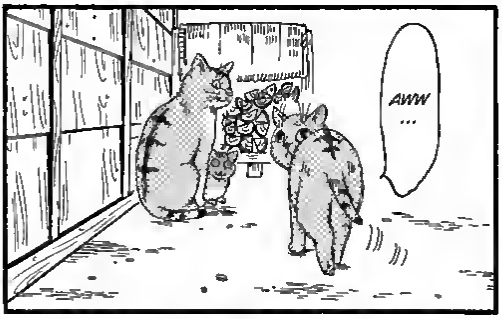

KA-WHAM
BANG
STUMBLE


TIGER?
MEO-OOW...
HE MUST HAVE HIS OWN REASONS FOR IT, I SUPPOSE ...
HEHE HE
HE'S PRETTY RESTLESS FOR BEING SUCH A HUGE MAN, THAT SAMURAI...


ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT BIG BEAR?
PANT
PANT

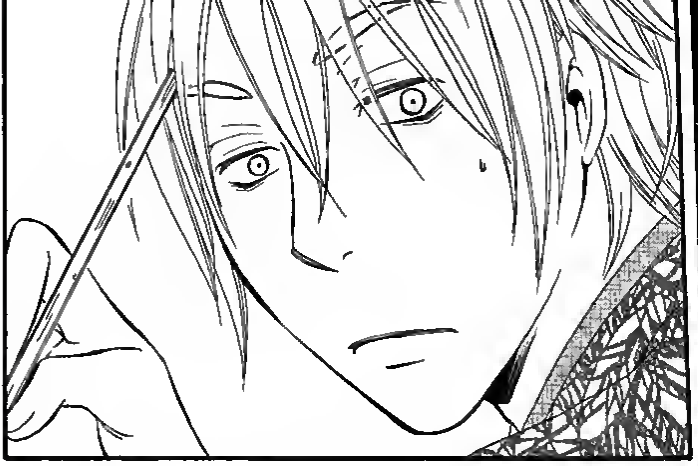
WHAT A MESS...
...I'VE GOT MY-SELF IN...
ALL OF THESE PEOPLE ARE GOING OUT OF THEIR WAY TO HELP ME...
ガタガタ SLIDE
...BUT WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT IT'D BE FULL OF CATS HERE!?
MEOW!! ♡
EEK!!
SLAM
MEOW?
MEO-MEO-MEOW!!
MEO-MEOW!
カリ SCRATCH
カリ SCRATCH

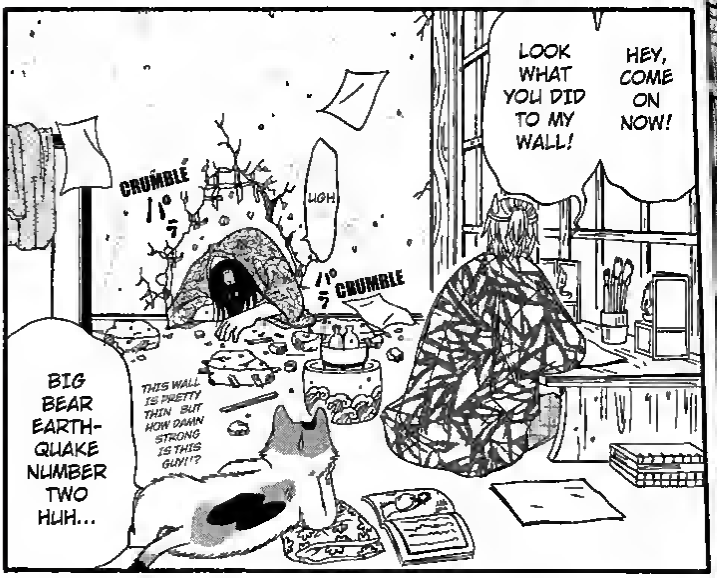

SCRATCH
カリ
SCRATCH
カリ
MEO-OOWW!!
カリ
SCRATCH
カリ
SCRATCH

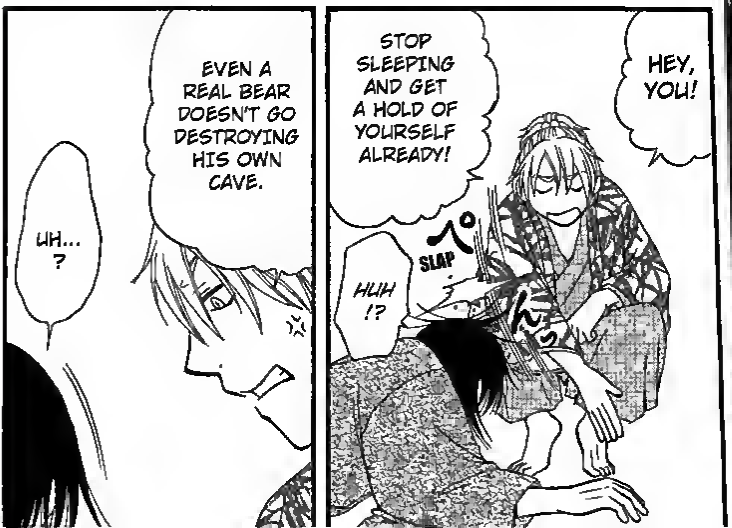

AWW...

MEOW?

PANT
HOP
PANT
HOP
NYOHOHO
ニョホホホホ
PANT
WHAAA!!




LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO MY WALL!
HEY, COME ON NOW!
CRUMBLE
UGH
CRUMBLE
BIG BEAR EARTH-QUAKE NUMBER TWO HUH...
THIS WALL IS PRETTY THIN BUT HOW DAMN STRONG IS THIS GUY!!?


EVEN A REAL BEAR DOESN'T GO DESTROYING HIS OWN CAVE.
UH... ?
STOP SLEEPING AND GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF ALREADY!
HEY, YOU!
SLAP
HUH !?

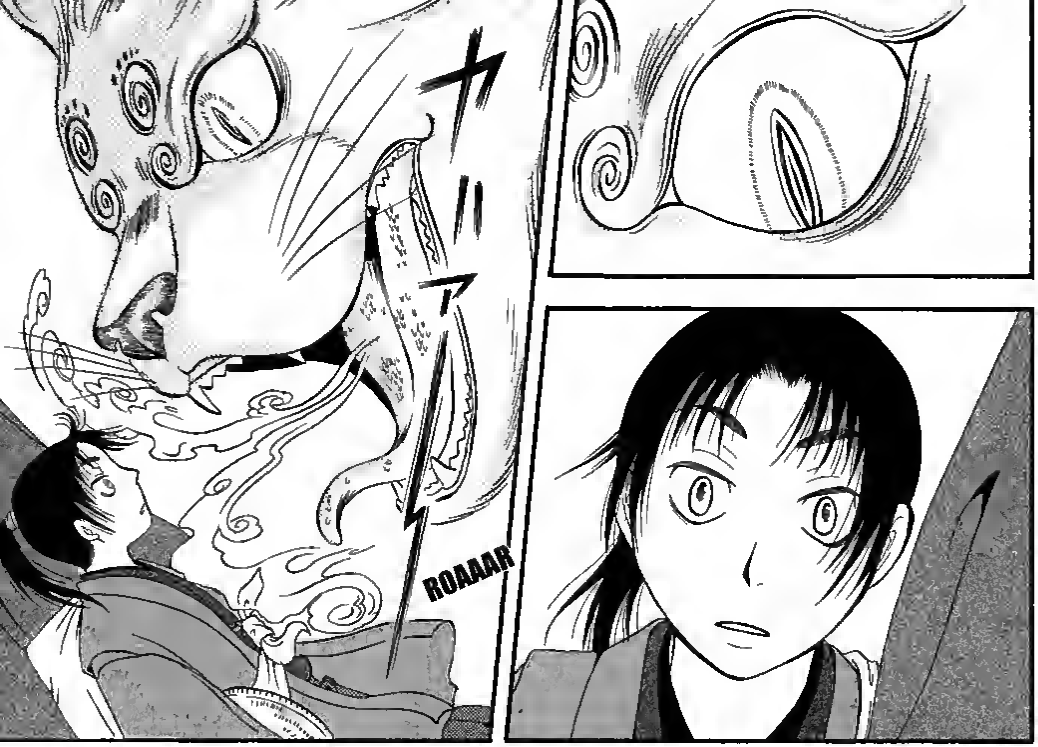
WHA-AAA !!!
CRASH

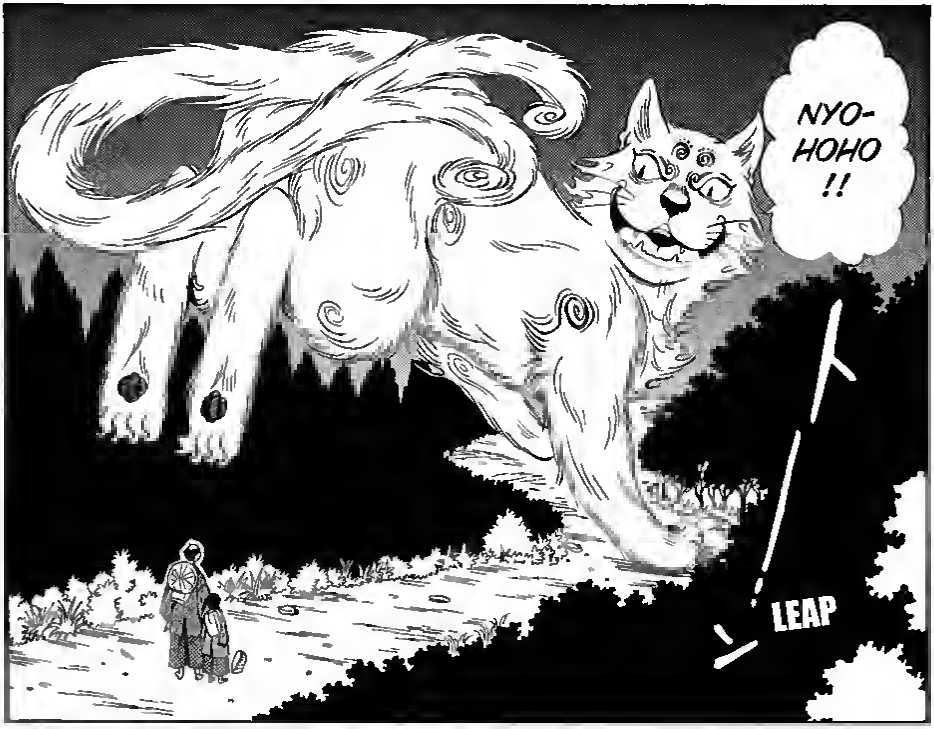
A BEAR...?
BEAR ?!
OW-WWW-WW ...!!
WELL, ONE THING'S FOR SURE: THIS IS MISTER NISHI-URA.
BUT HE'S YOUNGER THAN I EXPECTED
EEK!! A CAT!!
THUD
ごん
19...
ARE YOU MISTER NISHI-URA?
WELL, YEAH ...
I HAD A BATH AND DID SOME GROOM-ING
SO HOW OLD ARE YOU?
I'M 19...

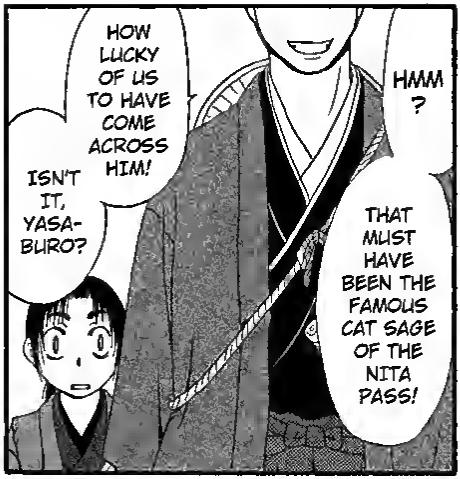
W-WELL... IT'S AN OLD STORY...
DREAMS !?
UH...
GRIN
HEY, NITA !!
NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE...
I'VE MADE A COMPLETE FOOL OF MYSELF.
BEING A SAMURAI, WITHOUT A MASTER NONETHELESS, JUST THE FACT THAT DREAMS OF CATS MAKE ME SO SCARED, I...
ME AND MY FATHER WERE TRAVELLING AS PART OF OUR DISCIPLINE PRACTICE...
...WE FOUND OURSELVES AT NIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MOUNTAINS.
SHIMO-SHIMA ...?
...
AND WHEN WE REACHED AMAKUSA-SHIMOSHIMA IN HIGO...

MEN WHO ARE PUT OFF BALANCE BY SOMETHING SO TRIVIAL AS THIS, DON'T MAKE GOOD WARRIORS, YOU KNOW?
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT...
HOW CAN YOU FEEL AT EASE IN THIS SITU-ATION...
WE'LL FIND A HOUSE IF WE JUST KEEP WALKING, AND IF WE CAN'T WALK ANYMORE WE CAN JUST SLEEP OUT-SIDE.
AHAHA!
FATHER! BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN LAZING AROUND, IT'S GOTTEN DARK ALREADY!!
SHUFFLE..
SHUFFLE SHUFFLE..
BUT, FATHER ...!!
LOOK, TWO BRIGHT LANTERNS OVER THERE!
WE CAN ASK FOR DIREC-TIONS FROM THESE PEOPLE.

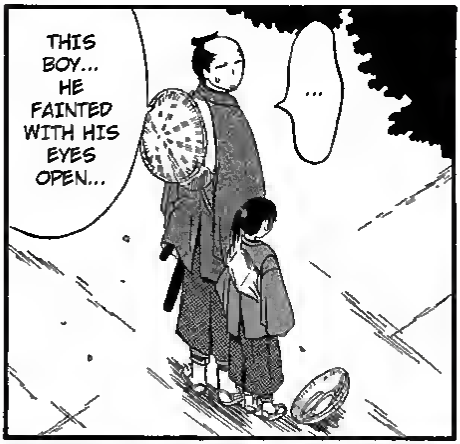
THESE ARE EYES!!
にぃ
GRIN
ぱっ
NYAHAHAHA

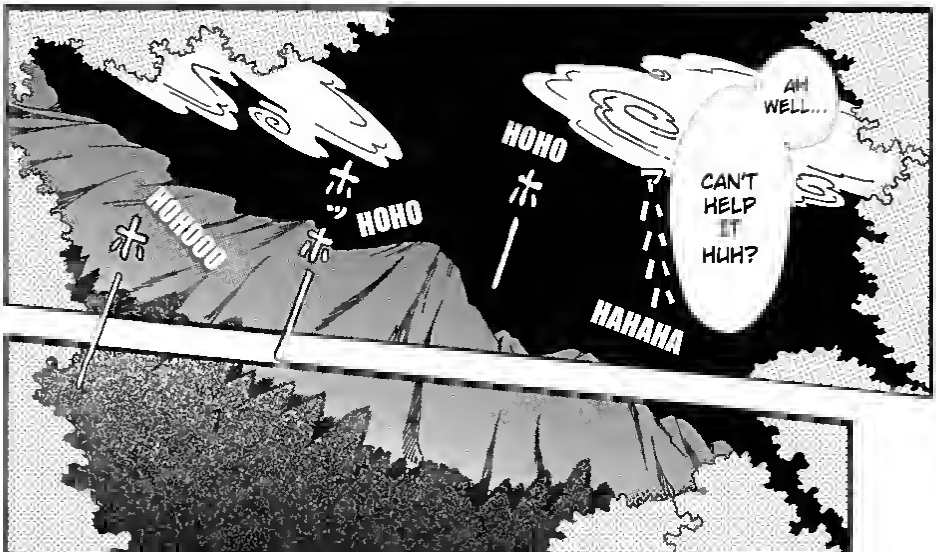

ROAAAR


NYO-
HOHO
!!
LEAP

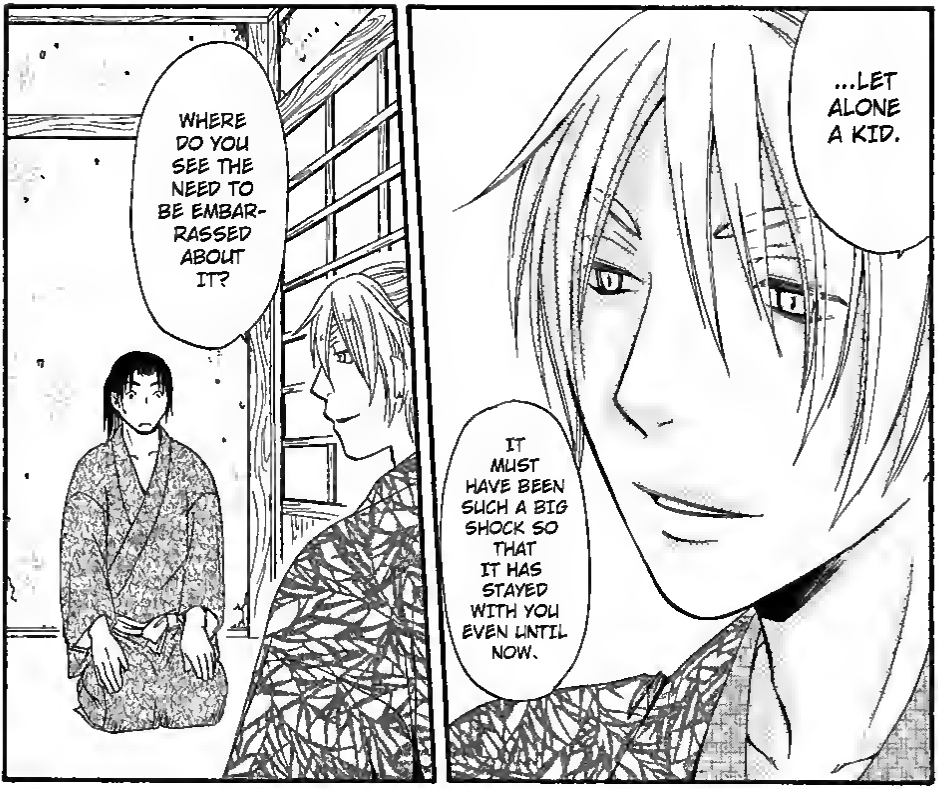

HOW LUCKY OF US TO HAVE COME ACROSS HIM!
ISN'T IT, YASA-BURO?
HMM ?
THAT MUST HAVE BEEN THE FAMOUS CAT SAGE OF THE NITA PASS!

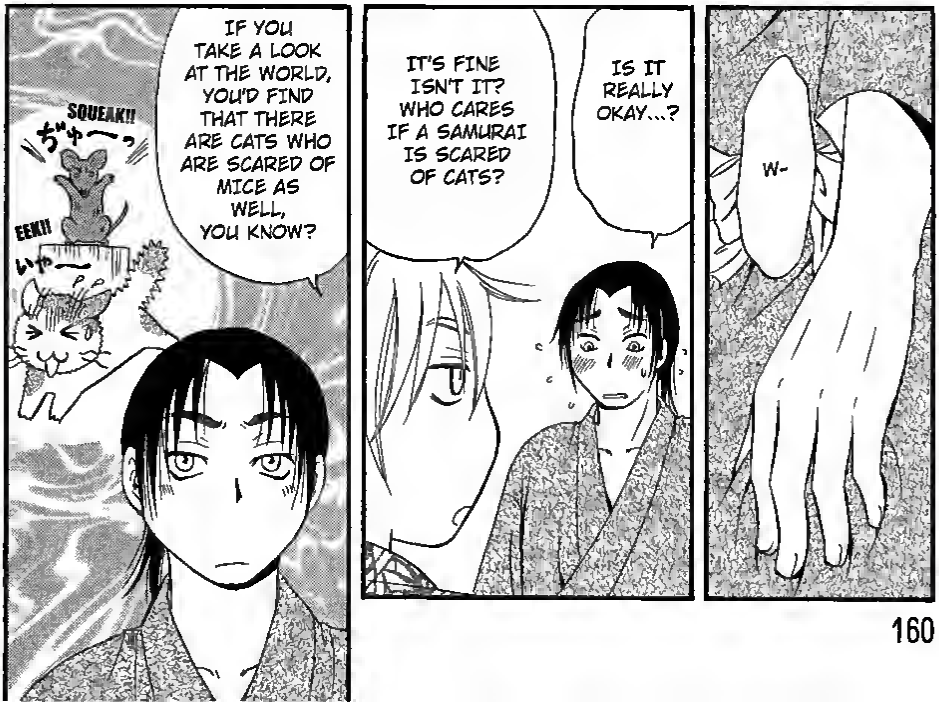
NYOHOHO!!
HOP


THIS BOY... HE FAINTED WITH HIS EYES OPEN...
...


AH WELL...
CAN'T HELP IT HUH?
HAHAHA
HOHO
HOHO
HOHOOO

A PRANK-LOVING CAT SAGE WHO'S LAUGH SOUNDS LIKE 'NYOHOHO' HUH...
HMM...
I ONCE HAD A SEVERE ENCOUNTER AT SHIMOSHIMA MYSELF...
HUH, YOU TOO, JUBEI ...??
EH?
I DO BELIEVE YOU.
IT MUST BE HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT EVER SINCE THEN I'VE BEEN SCARED OF CATS...
IT'S SO EXTREMELEY EMBARRASSING...
SHUFFLE
YOU KNOW...
WELL...
COMING ACROSS A MONSTER LIKE THAT SCARES THE HELL OUT OF EVEN THE MOST GROWN-UP ADULTS.


WHERE DO YOU SEE THE NEED TO BE EMBARRASSED ABOUT IT?
...LET ALONE A KID.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN SUCH A BIG SHOCK SO THAT IT HAS STAYED WITH YOU EVEN UNTIL NOW.

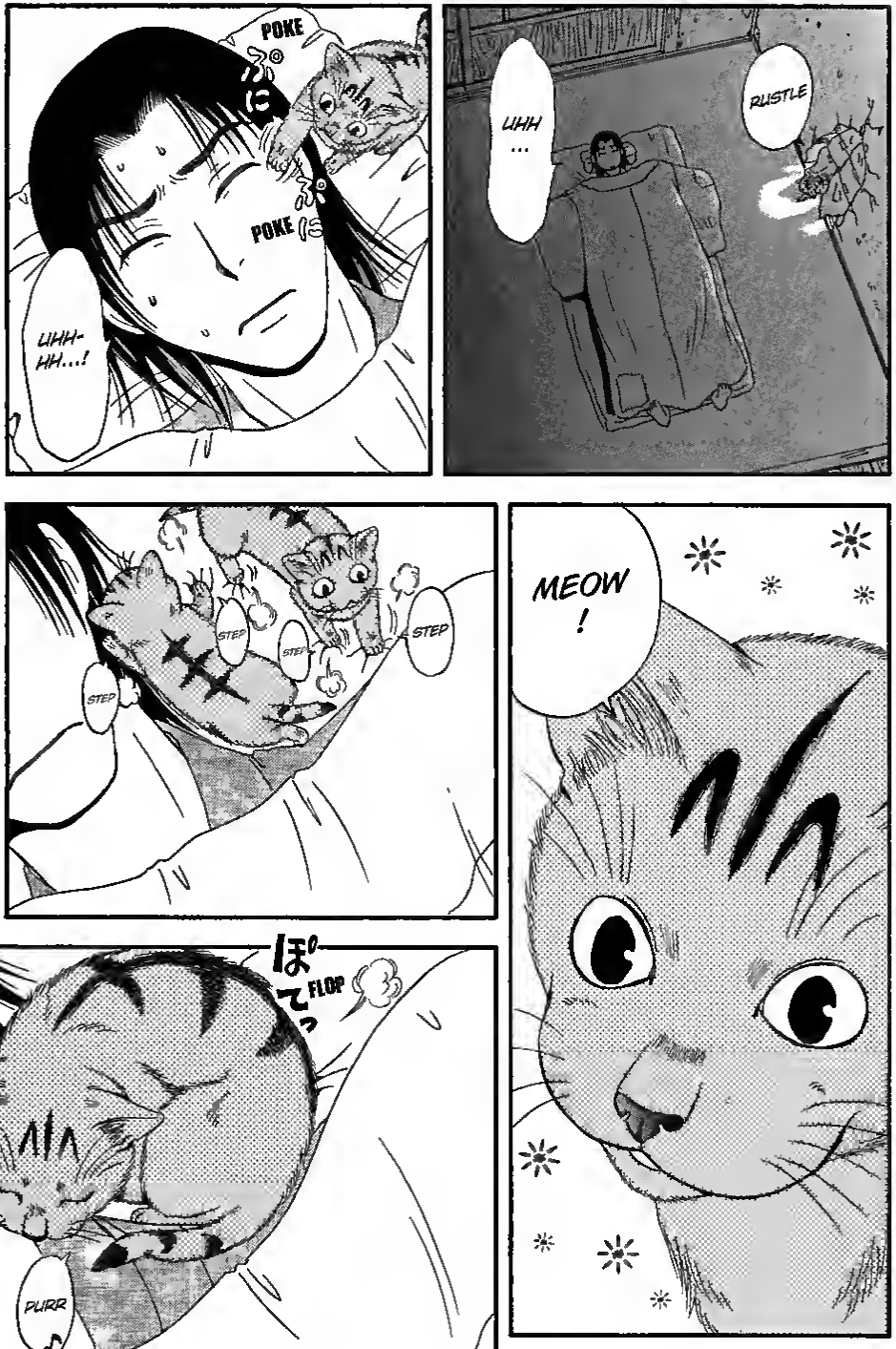

IF YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THE WORLD, YOU'D FIND THAT THERE ARE CATS WHO ARE SCARED OF MICE AS WELL, YOU KNOW?
SQUEAK!!
EEK!!
IT'S FINE ISN'T IT? WHO CARES IF A SAMURAI IS SCARED OF CATS?
IS IT REALLY OKAY...?
W-

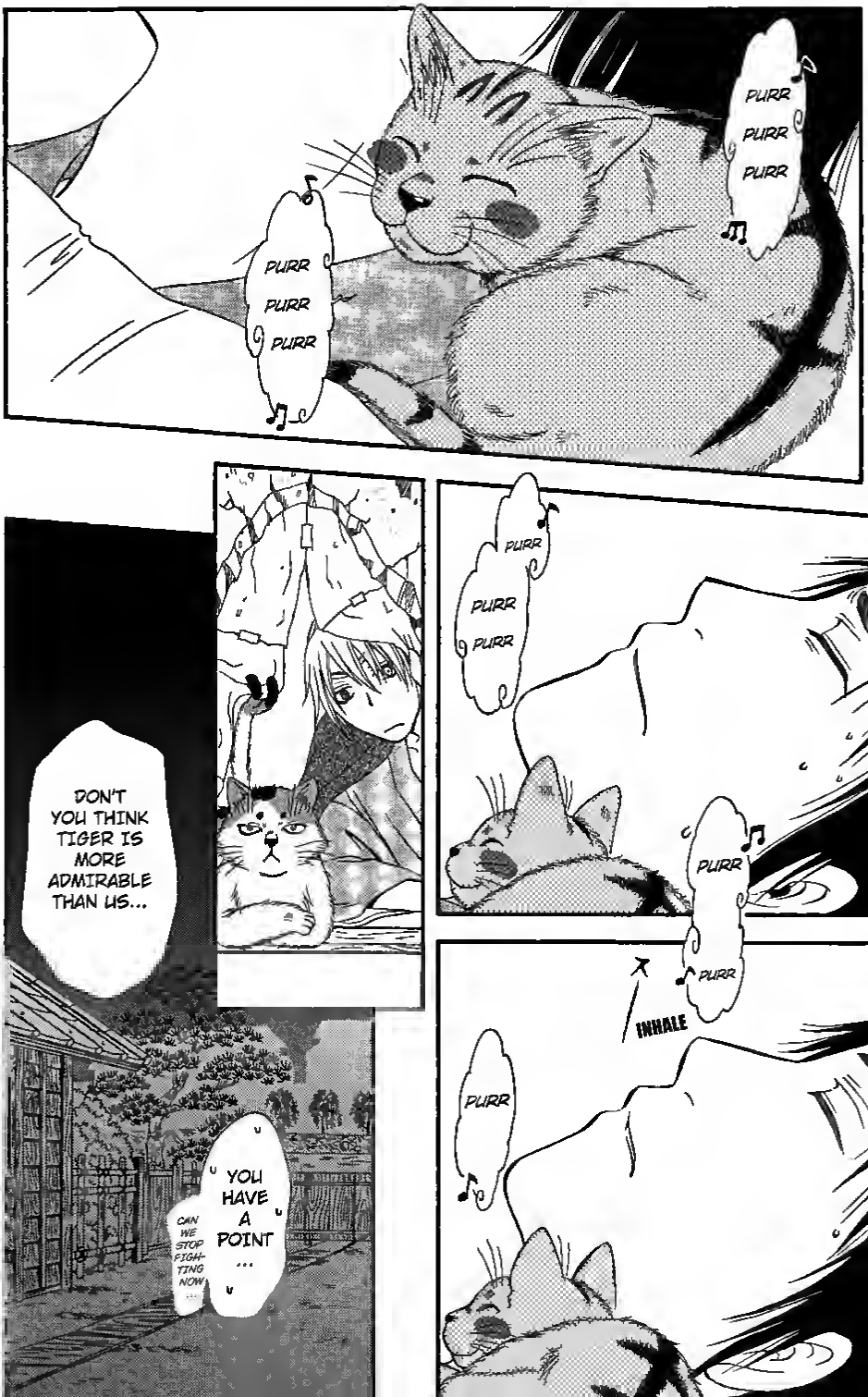
HEH ...
HEHE-HE...
YOU'RE RIGHT,
MAYBE IT'S JUST FINE!
BECAUSE THERE ARE GUYS LIKE YOU AROUND, IT MAKES THIS WORLD THAT MUCH MORE ENJOYABLE, YOU SEE?
NO IT'S NOT ENJOY-ABLE!!

DOOR SIGN: CAT PAINTER JUBEI

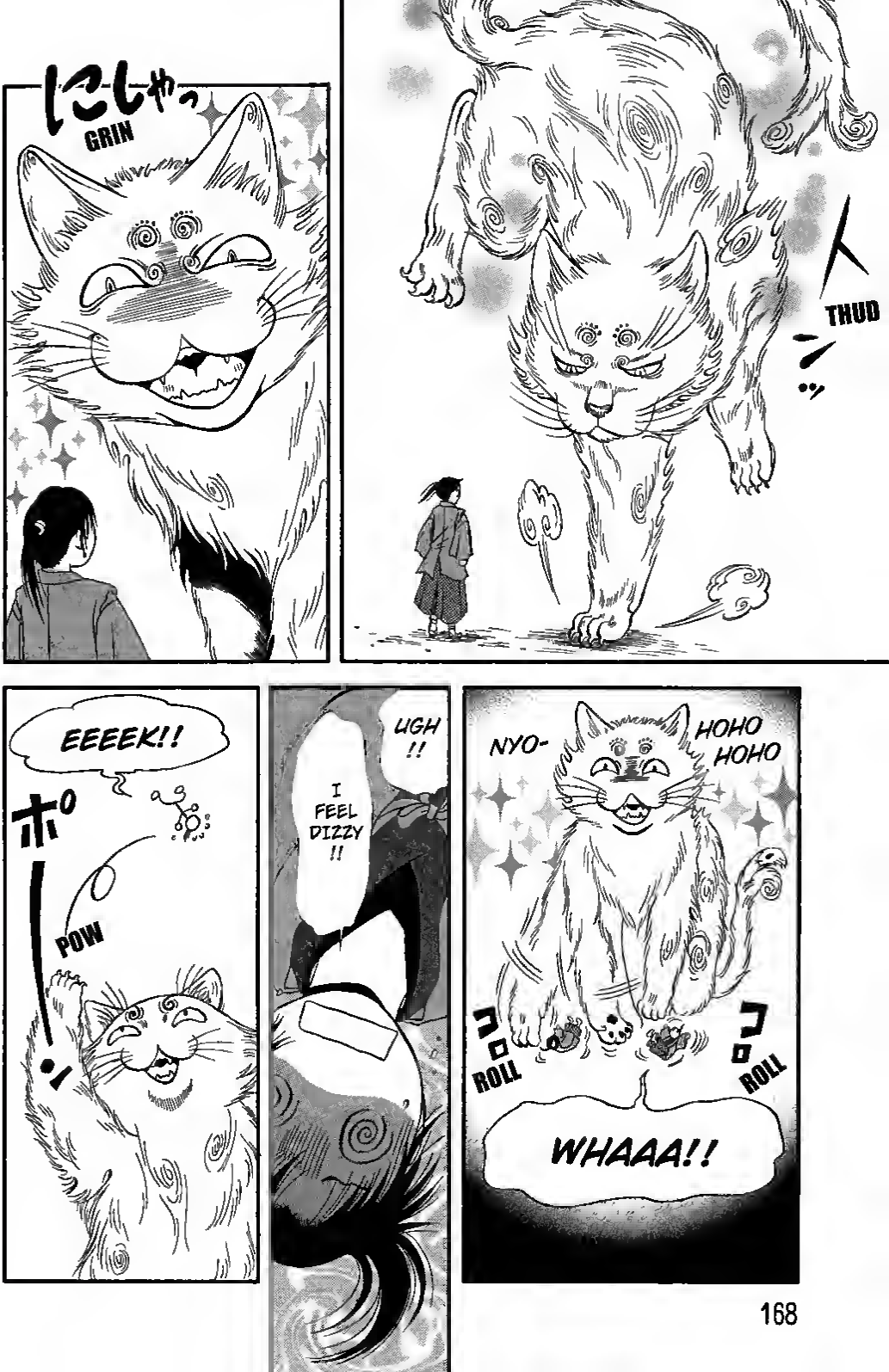
UHHH-HHH...
AH... LOOKS LIKE HE'S HAVING NIGHTMARES AGAIN...
UH...
SIZZLE
WAH WAH
SIZZLE SIZZLE
I'M PRETTY SURE THAT AT THAT TIME YOU WERE STILL THE CAT SAGE, WEREN'T YOU??
YOU SAY THAT NOW, BUT IT WAS ONLY MY INTENTION TO TEASE THEM A LITTLE.
THAT LITTLE BOY FROM THEN HAS SURE GOTTEN BIG!
OH!
I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE THE NAGAYA IS FULL OF CATS
SO, MISTER CAT SAGE NITA. HOW ARE YOU PLANNING ON MAKING UP FOR THAT?
UH... !!
MEOWW ♥ THERE IS A NEW CAT SAGE NOW MEOW!!

スコーン
PLONK
IF YOU DO THAT, YOU'D TRAUMATIZE HIM EVEN MORE!!
I COULD SCARE HIM EVEN MORE, SO HE'D FORGET ABOUT THAT PAST INCIDENT!
NYOHOHO!
UH ...
MEOW ?
STEP STEP STEP
I MIGHT HAVE LISTENED IF YOU'D CALLED ME GARBAGE PAPER ARTIST, BUT TO GO AS FAR AS TOILET PAPER!!? YOU HUGE HEADED CAT!!
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT, YOU TOILET PAPER ARTIST!!
FOR LADY CATS, A BIG HEAD IS VERY ATTRACTIVE, YOU KNOW?
ガサ
RUSTLE
ガサ
RUSTLE


POKE
POKE
UHH-HH...!
UHH...
RUSTLE
STEP
STEP
STEP
MEOW!
ぽてっ
FLOP
PURR


PURR
PURR
PURR
PURR
PURR
PURR
PURR
PURR
PURR
INHALE
DON'T YOU THINK TIGER IS MORE ADMIRABLE THAN US...
YOU HAVE A POINT ...
CAN WE STOP FIGHTING NOW ...

ROAAAAR
EH?
HOP
HOP
ROAAR
HOP
HOP


にしゃっ
GRIN
THUD
EEEEK!!
ポ
POW
UGH !!
I FEEL DIZZY !!
NYO-
HOHO HOHO
コロ
ROLL
コロ
ROLL
WHAAA!!

ぽ
SNATCH
ん
OH!
ひゅるるる
FIIUUU
WHAT!
MEOW !!
TIGER !!
ハ°
SLIP
NGGG
んょ
んょ
NGGG
YOU ...!
Y-
ポ
BOUNCE
ポ
BOUNCE
BAM
べしっ

NYAHAHAHA
ニャハハハ
BANG
ow ow ow...
MEOW !!
HISS
STILL IN WARNING STAGE
RAWRR
ちょこ
SHUFFLE
RAWRRR
WARNING STAGE

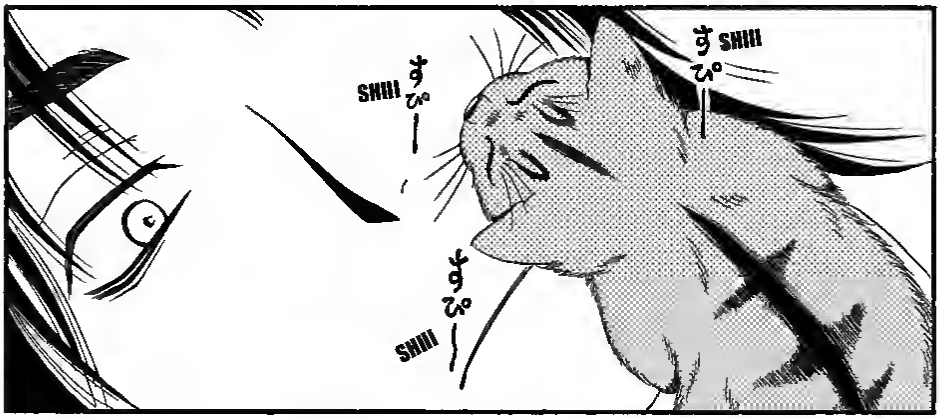
MEOW !!!
MEO ...!!
WHACK
ぺそんっ
STOP !!
E-
EVEN IF YOU EAT THAT...
I DOUBT IT'LL FILL YOUR STOM-ACH...!
WHY DON'T YOU FIGHT AGAINST ME!!

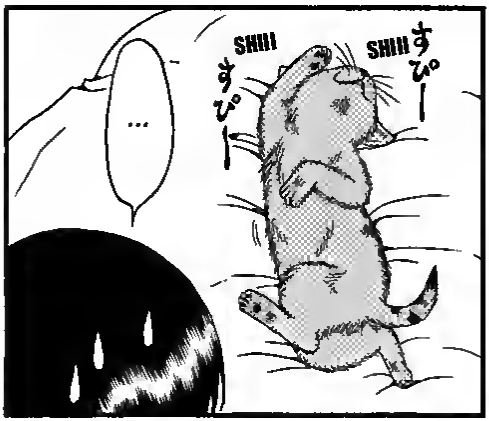
GLARE
UHHH
MEO-WWW...
EEK...
HYAAAA-!!
GRIP

SLICE
BAM
MEOW !!
HUH ?
?
WAH HH

A DREAM ?
チチチ
KAW KAW KAW

HUH!!

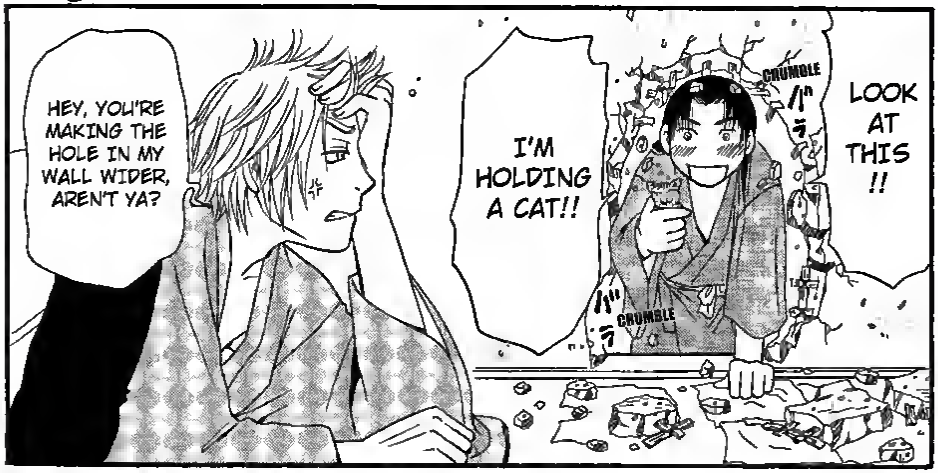

すぴー SHIII
すぴー SHIII
すぴー SHIII

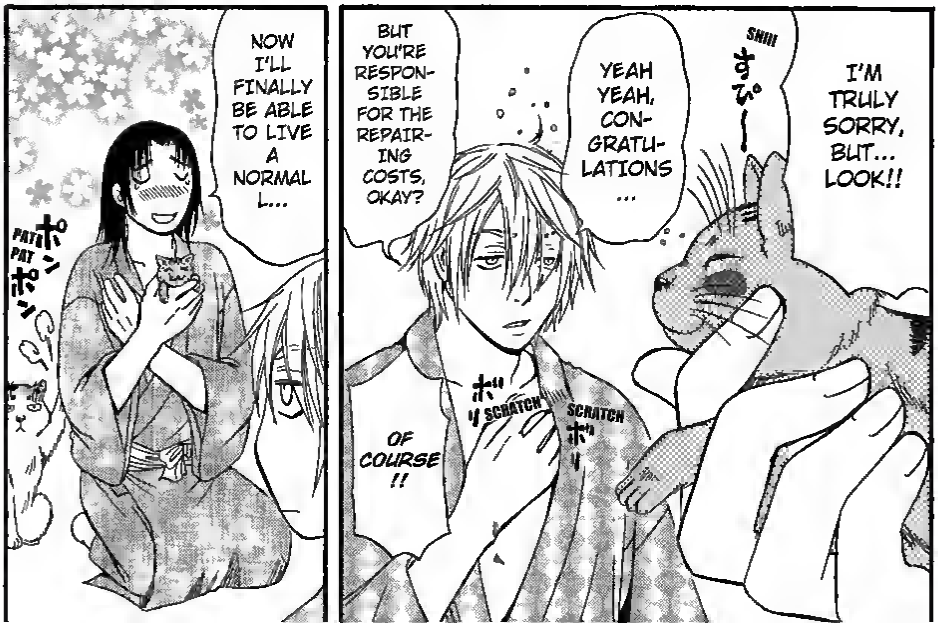

…
すぴー SHIII
すぴー SHIII

SHOCK
WHA-AAA-AA!!
ころ ROLL
ころ ROLL

FOR SUCH A LITTLE ONE,
HE SURE FOUGHT WITH ALL ITS MIGHT.
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS JUST A DREAM...
ドキ B-BMP
SHH
SO SOFT ...
ドキ B-BMP

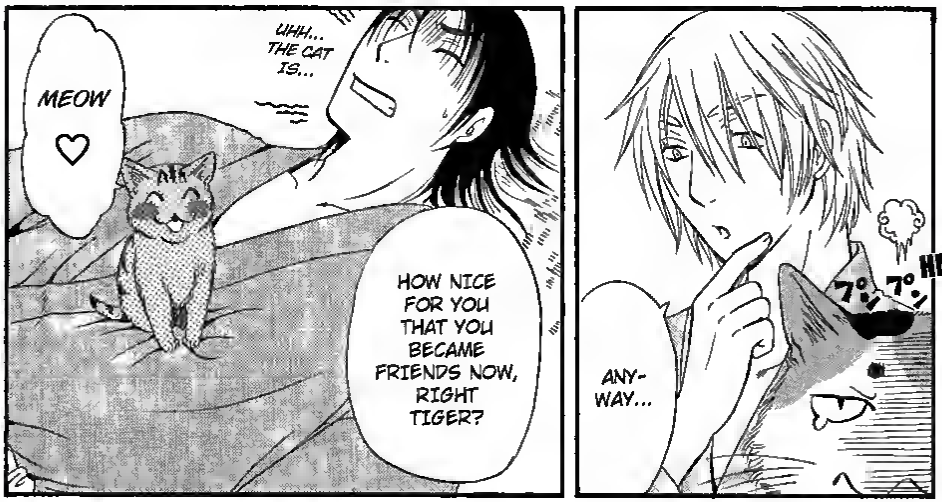
MISTER JUBEI !!
WHA !!
FLUTTER
FLUTTER
CRASH
HM?
CHIRP
CHIRP


HEY, YOU'RE MAKING THE HOLE IN MY WALL WIDER, AREN'T YA?
I'M HOLDING A CAT!!
CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE
LOOK AT THIS !!


NOW I'LL FINALLY BE ABLE TO LIVE A NORMAL...
PAT PAT
BUT YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REPAIRING COSTS, OKAY?
OF COURSE !!
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
YEAH YEAH, CONGRATULATIONS...
SHIII
I'M TRULY SORRY, BUT... LOOK!!

A LOOK THAT SAYS 'HOW NICE FOR YOU'.
MEOW ♡
SO ANY CAT EXCEPT TIGER IS STILL IMPOS-SIBLE FOR YOU HUH...
MEOW?
FAINT
CHEER UP, NITA!
NEXT TIME,
ROLL
ROLL

CAPTION: TAIZAN NITA PASS - THE CAT SAGE



END OF CHAPTER V

EDO NEKOE
JUBEI
OTOGIZOSHI

猫絵十兵衛

御伽草紙

ねこえじゅうべえおとぎそうし

CHAPTER VI
DRAWING SKILLS

画巧（えだくみ）の猫の巻

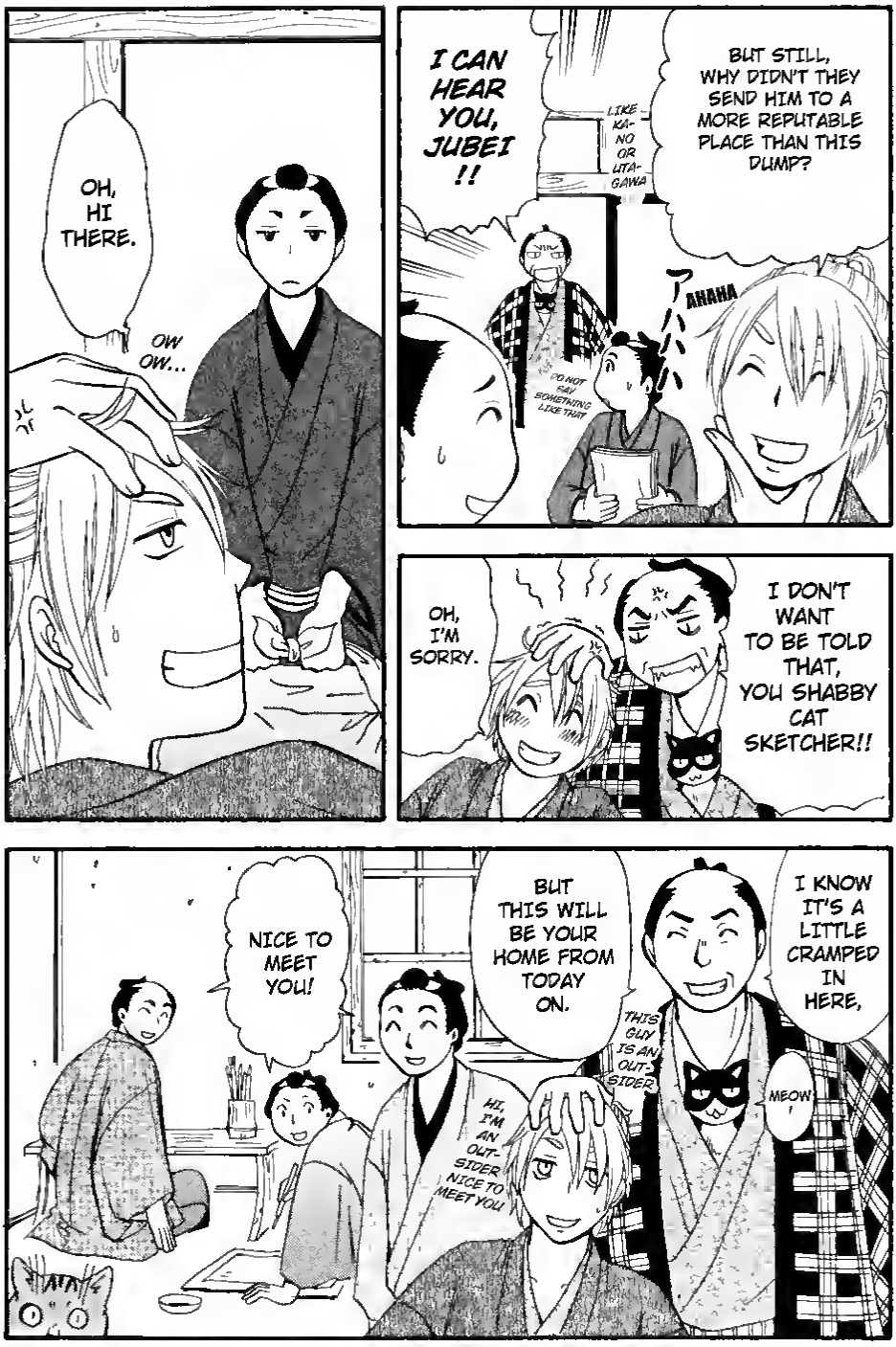
WELL THEN,
I'M COUNTING ON YOU, MASTER JUGEN!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO HURRY HOME SO QUICKLY, MR. TACHIBANA! HOW ABOUT SOME TEA INSIDE?
I'M SORRY, BUT THE PALANQUIN IS WAITING...

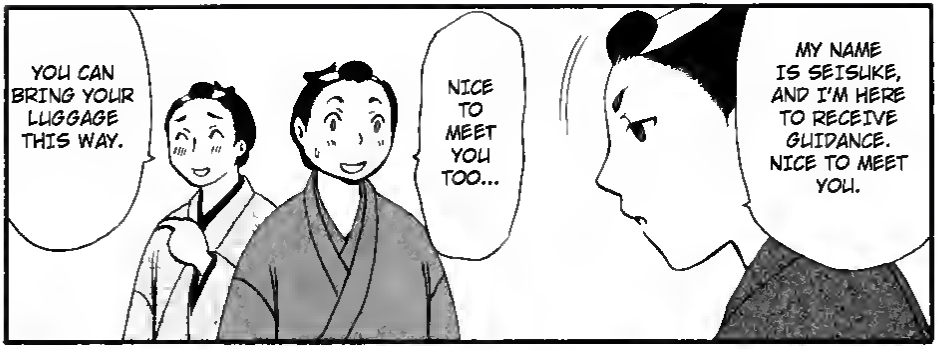
THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF SEISUKE.

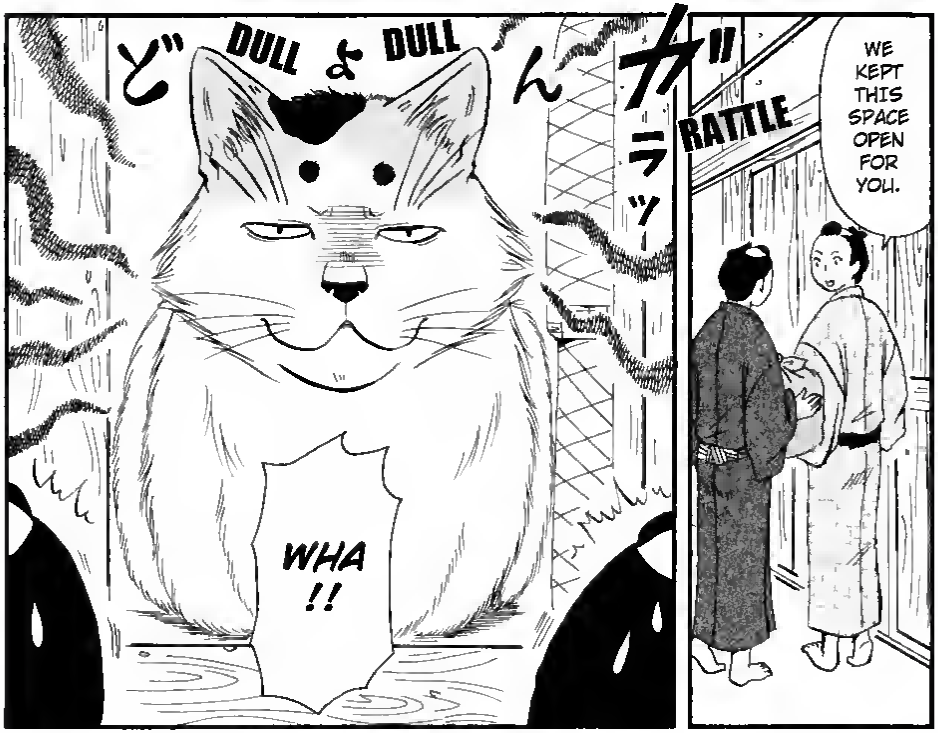
THIS TIME, IT'S THE OLDEST SON OF THE TACHIBANA FAMILY, THE ONES RUNNING THAT CONFECTIONERY BUSINESS.
YEAH.
DID OUR MASTER TAKE ON ANOTHER APPRENTICE AGAIN?
HMM? SUCH A BIG NAME WANTS TO BECOME AN APPRENTICE OF OUR MASTER?

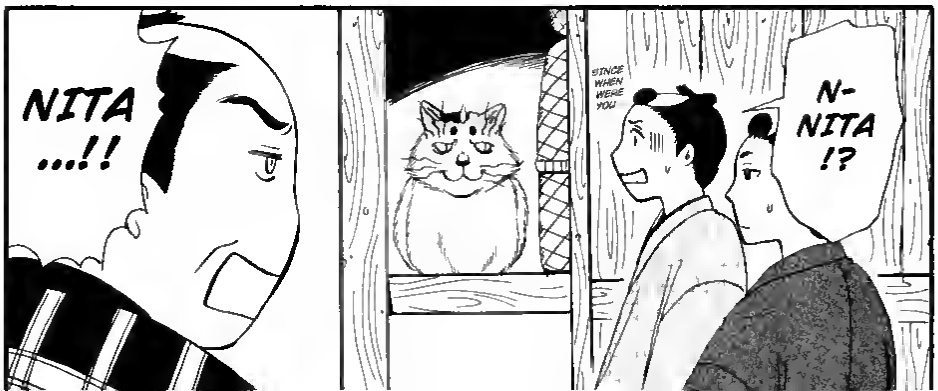
AND SEISUKE, LISTEN CAREFULLY TO WHAT THE MASTER SAYS, OKAY?

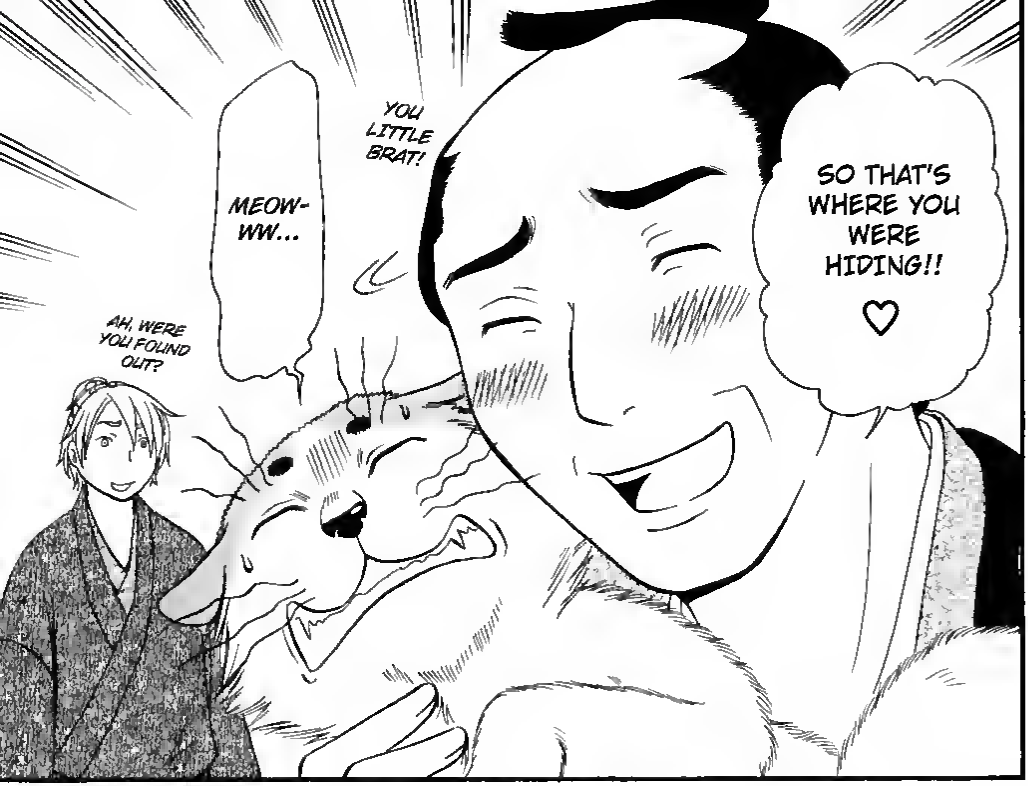
I HEARD THAT HIS SECOND WIFE HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO A SON,
AND ACCORDING TO THE RUMORS, MR. TACHIBANAYA'S SECOND WIFE IS QUITE THE DOMINANT ONE...
WEL-COME!
COME IN, COME IN!
HMMM?
SO YOU CAN SEE IT AS A DIMPLOMATIC WAY TO DRIVE OFF A NUISANCE ...
IT MUST BE TOUGH FOR HIM.

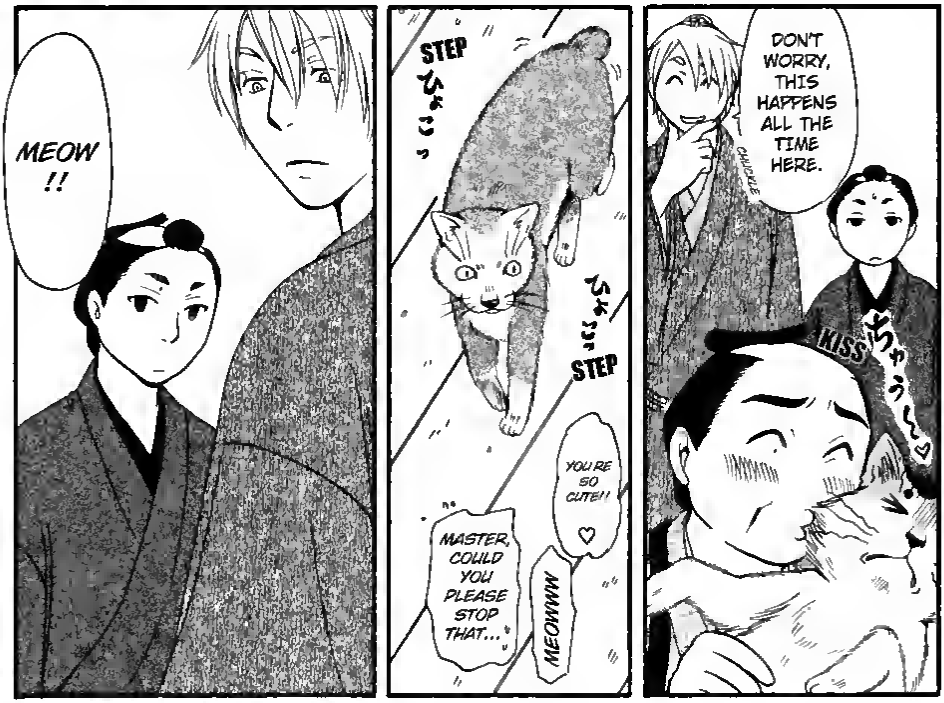

OH, HI THERE.
OW OW...
I CAN HEAR YOU, JUBEI !!
LIKE KANO OR UTAGAWA
BUT STILL, WHY DIDN'T THEY SEND HIM TO A MORE REPUTABLE PLACE THAN THIS DUMP?
DO NOT SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT
アハハ AHAHA
OH, I'M SORRY.
I DON'T WANT TO BE TOLD THAT, YOU SHABBY CAT SKETCHER!!
NICE TO MEET YOU!
BUT THIS WILL BE YOUR HOME FROM TODAY ON.
I KNOW IT'S A LITTLE CRAMPED IN HERE,
THIS GUY IS AN OUTSIDER
MEOW
HI, I'M AN OUTSIDER NICE TO MEET YOU

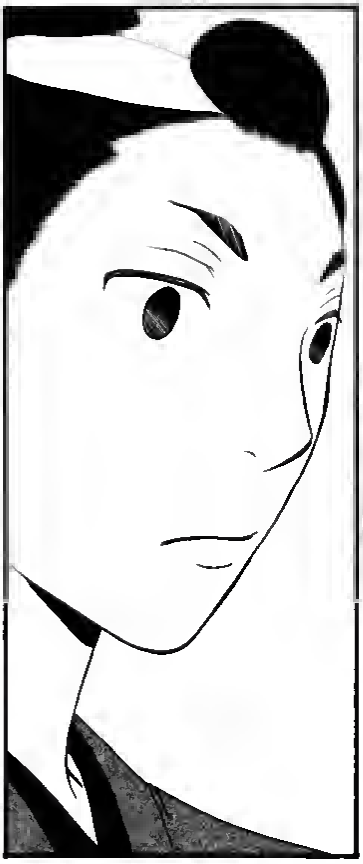

MY NAME IS SEISUKE, AND I'M HERE TO RECEIVE GUIDANCE. NICE TO MEET YOU.
NICE TO MEET YOU TOO...
YOU CAN BRING YOUR LUGGAGE THIS WAY.


WE KEPT THIS SPACE OPEN FOR YOU.
RATTLE
ラッ
DULL
DULL
WHA !!

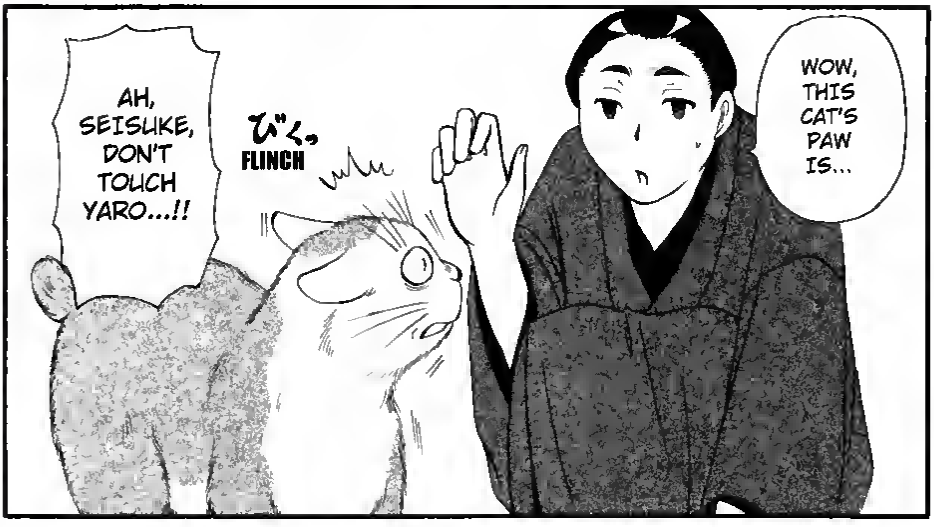

N-NITA !?
SINCE WHEN WERE YOU
NITA ...!!


SO THAT'S WHERE YOU WERE HIDING!!
♡
YOU LITTLE BRAT!
MEOW-WW...
AH, WERE YOU FOUND OUT?


MEOW!!
STEP
ぷちっ
ぷちっ
STEP
YOU'RE SO CUTE!!
♡
MASTER, COULD YOU PLEASE STOP THAT...
MEOWWW
DON'T WORRY, THIS HAPPENS ALL THE TIME HERE.
CHUCKLE
KISS
ちゅう♡



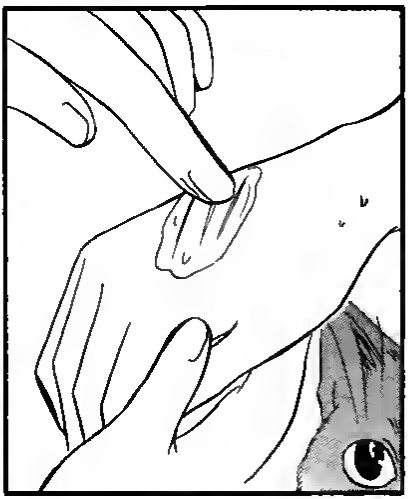
MEOW
!


AH, SEISUKE, DON'T TOUCH YARO...!!
びくっ
FLINCH
WOW, THIS CAT'S PAW IS...

OH MY ...
ARE YOU HURT ??
I'M FINE.
RUN
RUN
CLAW CLAW
...!!
HISS

RIGHT AWAY.
OTOKI, GET THE BANDAGE KIT!

BE QUIET! EVEN SMALL WOUNDS LIKE THESE CAN TURN INTO INFECTIONS!
UMM... YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THAT.



AND THESE HANDS WILL CREATE MANY DIFFERENT THINGS FROM NOW ON.
SO WE HAVE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF THEM!
OKAY, THAT SHOULD DO IT!

I'M GOING TO THE TOILET !!
OH, I MEAN MRS !!
MOTHER ...?
T- THANK YOU MOT ...
OKAY?
STUMBLE STUMBLE
GIGGLE
I DIDN'T HAVE TO MAKE A FOOL OF MYSELF THERE.
YARO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID ANYMORE!
EXACTLY. AND THAT HUMAN BOY DIDN'T HAVE ANY BAD INTENTIONS ANYWAY, YOU KNOW?

STOP HIDING AND COME HERE.
I THOUGHT I JUST HEARD TWO VOICES...
I'M THE ONLY ONE HERE, YOU SEE?
HA-HA-HA
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
CLO-SE ONE !!
ANYWAY, PLEASE COME IN, SEISUKE!
HISS

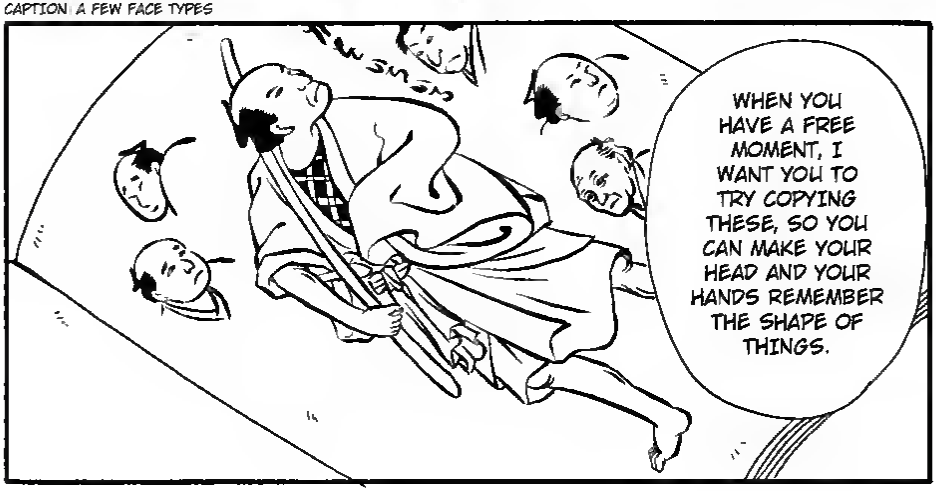
ISN'T HE ANGRY?
YARO IS ALWAYS LIKE THIS TOWARDS PEOPLE HE DOESN'T KNOW.
AH, GOTCHA!
HISSS
HE GOT HIT BY A WAGON WHEN HE WAS STILL A KITTEN.
AND EVER SINCE THEN HE'S BEEN SCARED OF PEOPLE.
ALL RIGHT, CALM DOWN...
AS OPPOSED TO PHYSICAL WOUNDS,
MEOW
WOUNDS OF THE HEART ARE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO HEAL.
HE'LL GET USED TO YOU AS YOU START GETTING ALONG WITH THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE.

PUSH
PUSH
I MIGHT, OR I MIGHT NOT, BUT KNOW THAT THE ONLY REASON I COULD ENTER THIS PLACE,
IS BECAUSE MY FATHER PAID FOR IT.
GET ALONG WITH THE PEOPLE HUH...
TWOK トースッ
OUCH !!
WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT BECOMING A PAINTER ?

HOW WILL YOUR MONEY PROTECT YOU NOW?
LOOK, YOU'RE BEING ASSAULTED BY PAW PADS!
YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE THE REBEL, HUH?
ぷに PAD
ぷに PAD

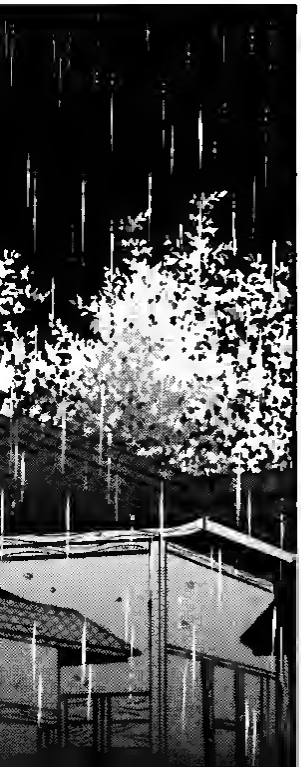
IN THE WORLD OF PAINT ARTISTS,
MONEY DOESN'T GET YOU ANYWHERE.
MASTER CAT LUCK!
I'M ABOUT TO GO HOME!
HUH?
AL-READY?
YOU WON'T HAVE TO MISS ME THAT MUCH. I'LL COME BY AGAIN.
MISS YOU!? ARE YOU CRAZY?

CAPTION: A FEW FACE TYPES


WHEN YOU HAVE A FREE MOMENT, I WANT YOU TO TRY COPYING THESE, SO YOU CAN MAKE YOUR HEAD AND YOUR HANDS REMEMBER THE SHAPE OF THINGS.

GRIN
DRAWING CATS!!
CATS ?

OTHER THAN THAT, IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO TRY SKETCHING THINGS YOU SEE AROUND YOU.
FIRST, I WANT YOU TO TRY...



IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOUR SKETCHES ARE BAD AT FIRST,
BUT SHOW IT TO ME WHENEVER YOU DRAW SOMETHING.
OKAY...

CATS ARE GREAT! DRAWING CATS BECOMES THE BASE FOR EVERYTHING BEYOND!
AND IT'S ALSO REALLY RELAXING AT THE SAME TIME!

CATS ...
RIB-BIT
RIB-BIT
SEISUKE, AREN'T YOU GOING TO SLEEP YET?
EASIER SAID THAN DONE...
IT'S THE FIRST TIME REALLY THAT I HAVE SEEN CATS UP CLOSE LIKE THIS...
くぁ～ YAWN
BUT I WAS TOLD TO RE-DO IT YOU SEE...
YEAH, IN JUST A MINUTE ...
OH, WELL DON'T FORCE YOURSELF, OKAY?
GOOD LUCK WITH IT, SEISUKE!
STAY STILL FOR A SECOND!

HEY, JUTOKU!! WHAT'S UP WITH THIS HALF-ASSED DRAWING?
IF YOU DON'T DRAW A NICE BACKGROUND HERE, THE WHOLE THING LOSES ITS MEANING!!
YES!!
YES!
TOMI!
SADA, CAN I ASK YOU TO WORK ON THE DETAILS OF THIS WORK?
GOT IT!
SEI-SUKE!
YES!
YOU'RE STILL NOT THERE.
YOU HAVE TO WATCH THE CATS MORE CAREFULLY AS YOU DRAW THEM.
TRY AGAIN!!
RUSTLE

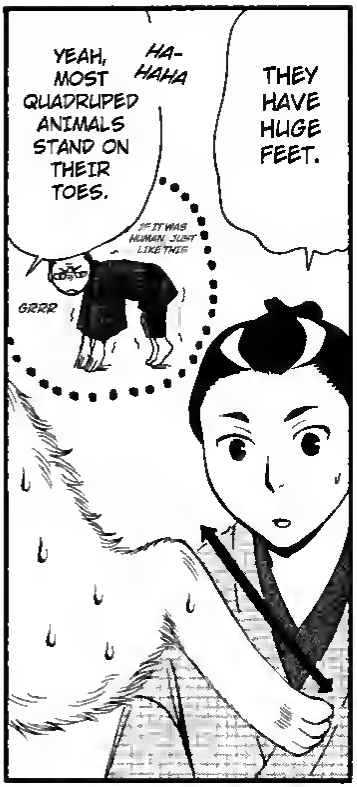
MRS. YOSHI-NO!
SEI-SUKE ?
COME HERE FOR A SECOND!
BUT BEFORE THAT, DELIVER THIS WORK TO TSUTA-YA.
AND HURRY UP WITH IT!
THUMP
ばた
THUMP
ばた
GOT IT...
RUSTLE
ON YOUR WAY BACK,
COULD YOU BUY SOME MANJU* FOR EVERYONE?
*SWEET DUMPLINGS
*RICECAKES FILLED WITH SWEET PASTE
I DON'T MIND IF YOU TAKE A LITTLE BREAK AND BUY YOURSELF SOME DANGO*.
IN RETURN,
DON'T TELL GEN

I'LL BE ON MY WAY THEN!
BE CARE-FUL!
AH...

THAT'S PRETTY GOOD!
HMM?
BAMBOO PIPES !!
BAMBOO PIPES FOR SALE!!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO CALL ME ANI!
JUBEI ... ANI*!
I'M NOT PART OF THAT SCHOOL ANYMORE ANYWAY!
G-GIVE THAT BACK !!
LET ME SEE!

*LITERALLY MEANS 'OLDER BROTHER', IMPLYING THAT THEY'RE PART OF THE SAME INSTITUTE

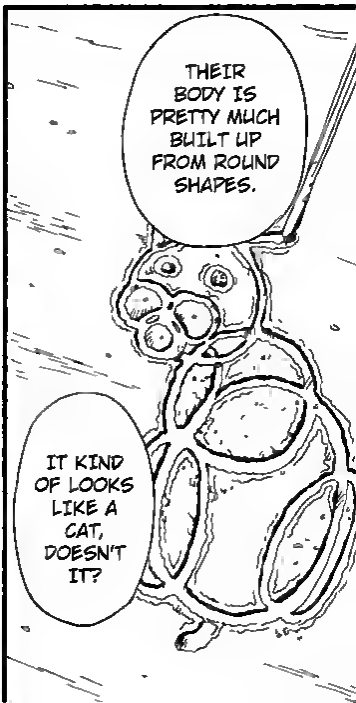
AHA, SO YOU CAME ACROSS YOUR MASTER'S NOTORIOUS CAT TRIALS HUH?
EVERYONE HAS TO GO THROUGH IT
CATS ...
...ARE SO DIFFI-CULT!
TO SOMEONE WHO'S NEVER HAD A CAT, A CAT'S BODY MUST LOOK REALLY DIFFERENTLY PUT TOGETHER THAN A HUMANS IS.
IS THIS MRS. YOSHINO ?
WHA !!
NO SURPRISE THAT OUR MASTER IS SERIOUS ABOUT TEACHING YOU.
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING SO DEPRES-SED?
THESE ARE A CAT'S KNEES.
KNEES
ELBOWS
THIS REPRESENTS THE BASIC BONE STRUC-TURE.
KRRRT
ガリ
IN FACT, THERE'S NOT SUCH A HUGE DIFFER-ENCE.

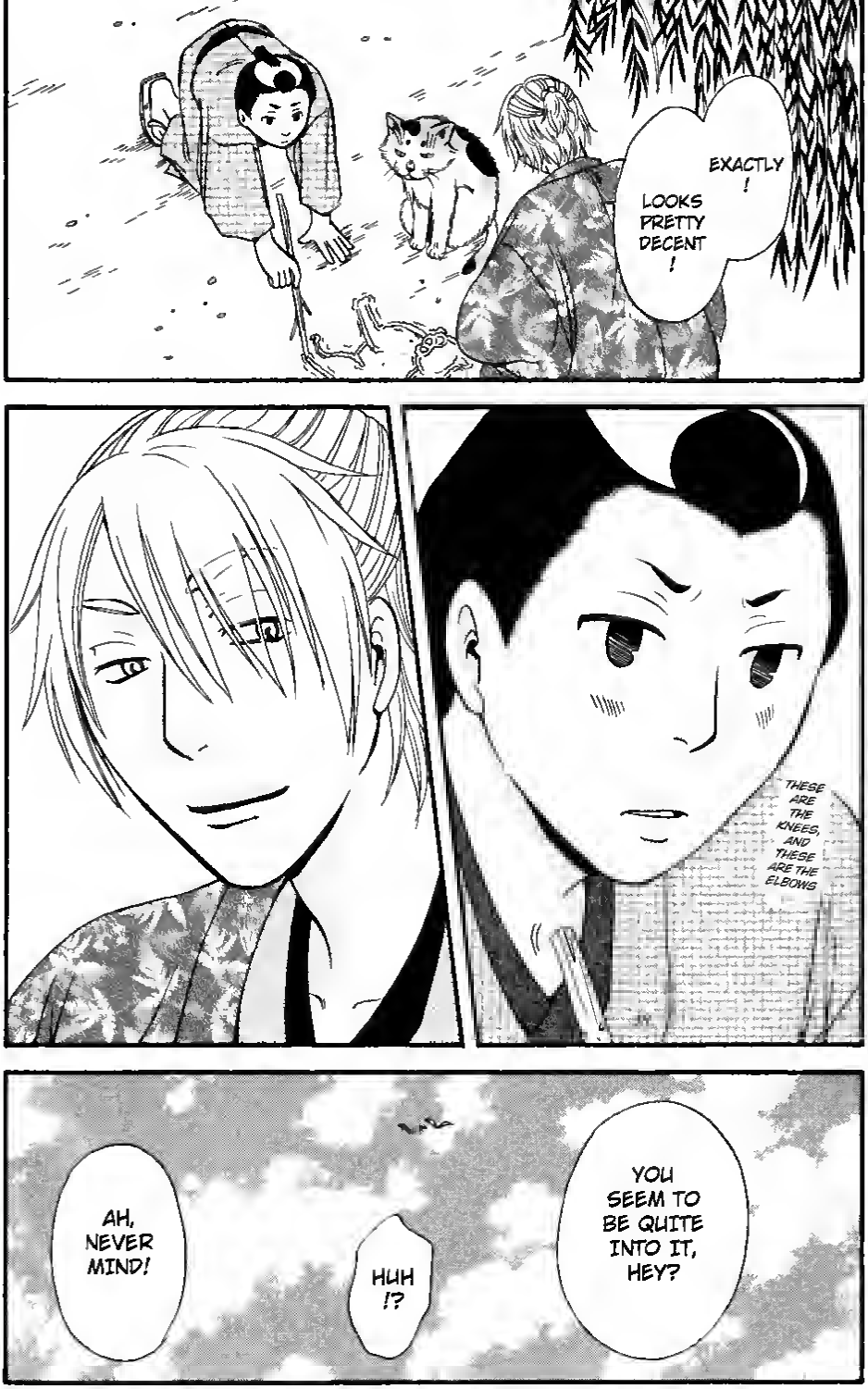

THEY HAVE HUGE FEET.
HA-HAHA
YEAH, MOST QUADRUPED ANIMALS STAND ON THEIR TOES.
IF IT WAS HUMAN, JUST LIKE THIS
GRRR

TO SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW,
THESE ARE EASILY MISTAKEN AS THE KNEES.
BUT IF YOU COMPARE IT TO OUR HUMAN BODY, THIS WOULD BE THE HEEL.
THE HEEL !?
THESE ARE THE WRISTS.

IF YOU FOLLOW THOSE GUIDELINES, DRAWING THEM BECOMES MUCH EASIER.
THIS IS A CAT FACING THE FRONT
I SEE!!

YOU'RE RIGHT!
YOU JUST HAVE TO COMBINE THAT WITH THEIR BONE STRUCTURE.


THEIR BODY IS PRETTY MUCH BUILT UP FROM ROUND SHAPES.
IT KIND OF LOOKS LIKE A CAT, DOESN'T IT?


EXACTLY!
LOOKS PRETTY DECENT!
THESE ARE THE KNEES, AND THESE ARE THE ELBOWS
YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE INTO IT, HEY?
HUH!?
AH, NEVER MIND!

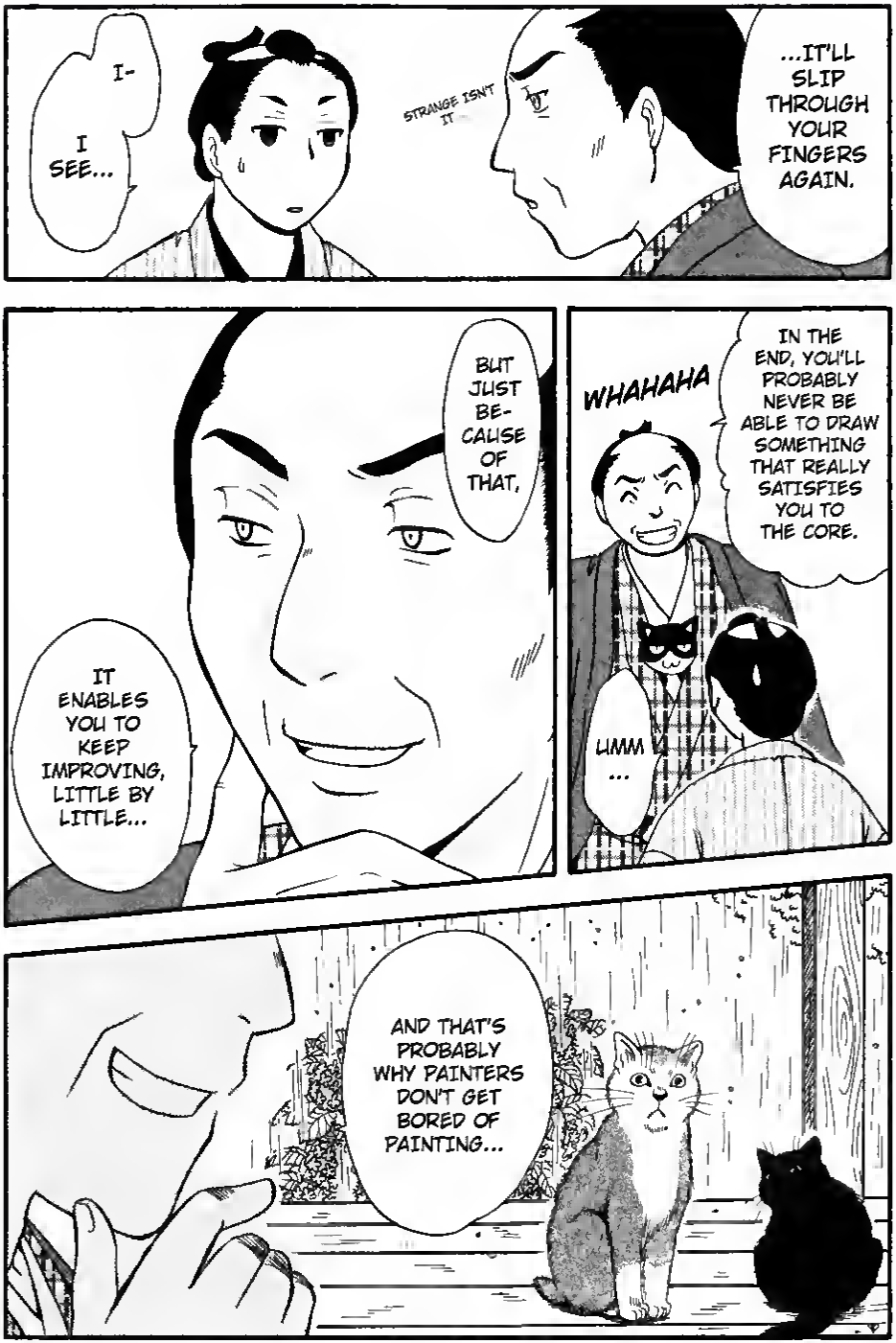
FLIP
FLIP
I AGREE...
I WISH THE RAINY SEASON WOULD BE OVER SOON.
IT STARTED RAINING AGAIN...
パラ
FLIP
SHUT
TO DO THIS OVER AND OVER AGAIN WITHOUT MOPING,
YOU REALLY HUNG IN THERE!
OKAY.

LOOKING AT YOUR DRAWINGS BEFORE YOU GOT INTO THIS PLACE, I KNEW YOU HAD SOME TALENT FOR THIS!
MISTER TACHIBANA ASKED ME TO CHECK IF YOU JUST WANTED TO DO THIS AS A HOBBY, OR IF YOU WERE SERIOUS ENOUGH TO MAKE A LIVING OUT OF THIS.
IN CASE YOU'RE JUST INTERESTED IN THIS AS A HOBBY,
HE TOLD ME YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME HOME AGAIN.
BUT IF YOU'D REALLY BE WILLING TO LIVE THE LIFE OF AN ARTIST, HE SAID YOU SHOULD JUST FORGET ABOUT THE FAMILY BUSINESS, AND GO FOR IT!

IF THERE'S AN ORDER, YOU'LL ALSO HAVE TO DRAW THINGS YOU'RE BAD AT, OR THINGS YOU JUST DON'T LIKE DRAWING.
MEOW
YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IF YOU DO THIS AS A WAY OF LIFE, YOU CAN'T JUST ALWAYS DRAW THINGS YOU LIKE.
DO YOU LIKE DRAWING, SEISUKE?
YES.
BEING A PAINTER IS A PRETTY COMPLI-CATED MATTER.
ALTHOUGH THERE ARE ALSO IDIOTS WHO RUN OFF BECAUSE OF THAT REASON, LIKE JUBEI...
HAHAHA

THERE'S A LOT OF SUFFERING WHEN FACED WITH A LACK IN ONES ABILITY,
BUT A LOT OF JOY WHEN YOU'RE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING REALLY WELL.

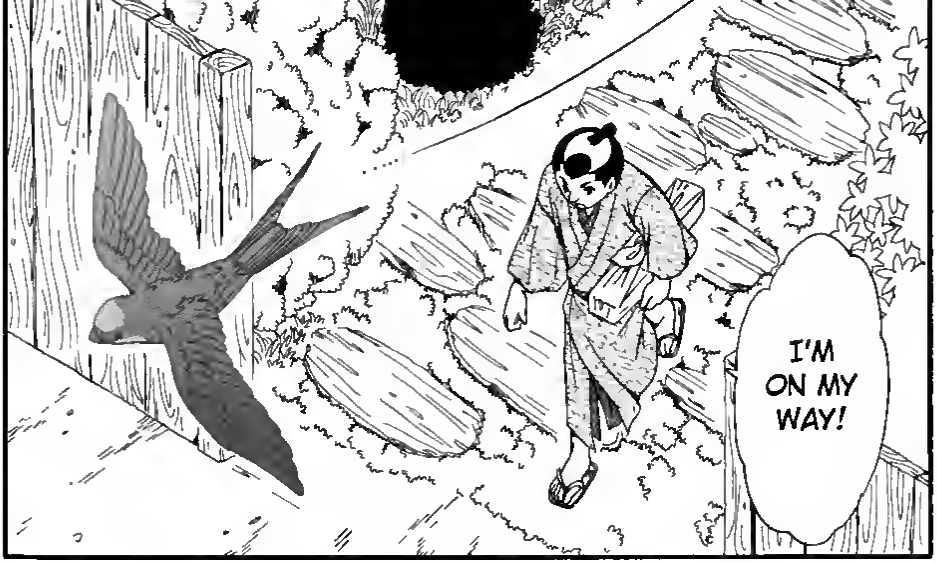
WHEN THAT HAPPENS TO YOU OVER AND OVER AGAIN, YOU'LL START SEEING THE LINES THROUGHOUT YOUR OWN LIFE.
THE PICTURE OF YOUR OWN LIFE WILL BECOME CLEAR,
AND WHEN YOU GET THERE, AND TRY TO REACH OUT FOR IT...

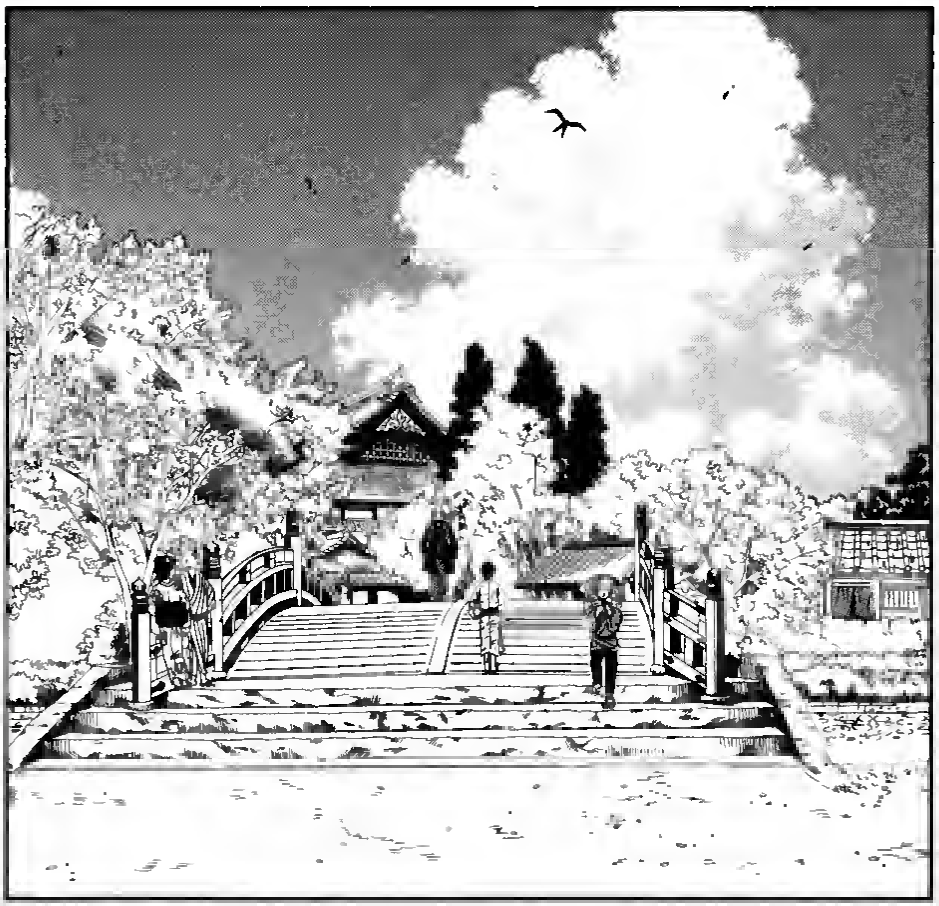

I-
I SEE...
STRANGE ISN'T IT
...IT'LL SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS AGAIN.
BUT JUST BE-CAUSE OF THAT,
IT ENABLES YOU TO KEEP IMPROVING, LITTLE BY LITTLE...
WHAHAHA
IN THE END, YOU'LL PROBABLY NEVER BE ABLE TO DRAW SOMETHING THAT REALLY SATISFIES YOU TO THE CORE.
UMM ...
AND THAT'S PROBABLY WHY PAINTERS DON'T GET BORED OF PAINTING...

MEOW
!

YARO ...
スリ RUB RUB
ISN'T IT UNBE-LIEV-ABLE...
HOW HE CAN PAINT SUCH AN AMAZING PIECE, AND STILL NOT FIND SATISFACTION ...

I ALSO ...
TWEET
TWEET
WHAT LOVELY WEATHER !
THE SUMMER HAS FINALLY COME!
SEISUKE, I'M SENDING YOU ON AN ERRAND!
RIGHT AWAY!





END OF CHAPTER 6

AFTERSTORY

FOR PICKING UP 'EDO NEKOE JUBEI OTOGIZOSHI'.

I'D LIKE TO OFFER YOU MY SINCERE GRATITUDE,

I CAN VAGUELY UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY'RE TRYING TO SAY HERE...

NOW AND THEN I WAS STRANDED ...

THIS IS TOO DIFFICULT !!

BOOK ABOUT PEOPLE IN THE MEIJI ERA

SO I STARTED OUT BY DOING SOME RESEARCH ON THAT, BUT...

I DON'T HAVE ANY RESOURCES ABOUT THE LIFE OF ORDINARY PEOPLE IN THOSE DAYS...

I WANTED TO WRITE MY OWN HISTORICALLY THEMED STORY, SINCE I'VE ALWAYS LOVED HISTORICAL NOVELS AND TV DRAMAS. BUT THIS WAS EASIER SAID THAN DONE.

THE ONLY THINGS I KNOW ARE FOLKLORE AND GHOST STORIES.

HOBBY

HMM?

*EDO IS THE FORMER NAME OF TOKYO, AS WELL AS THE NAME OF THE TIME PERIOD OF THE 17TH TO 19TH CENTURY.

AND ALSO, SOME SAY CARPENTERS IN EDO HAD A HARD TIME SCRAPING A LIVING, AND SOME SAY THEY EARNED TONS

FOR EXAMPLE SOME SOURCES SAY THERE WAS A KITCHEN IN A NAGAYA*, AND SOME SAY THERE WASN'T

...

WHICH ONE IS IT—

MOST BOOKS SAY NAGAYA HAD A KITCHEN.

EDO

INFORMATION FROM CHRONICLES WRITTEN BY PEOPLE WAS VERY DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON TIME AND PLACE. (EDO* PEOPLE WERE FOR EXAMPLE VERY DIFFERENT FROM KYOTO AND OSAKA PEOPLE).

KYOTO

THE EDO PERIOD* LASTED FOR A LONG PERIOD OF ABOUT 260 YEARS.

AN ERA THAT FASCINATES EVEN THE WHOLE WORLD

I PAINFULLY REALIZED THAT I SHOULD HAVE DONE MY BEST MORE AT SCHOOL.

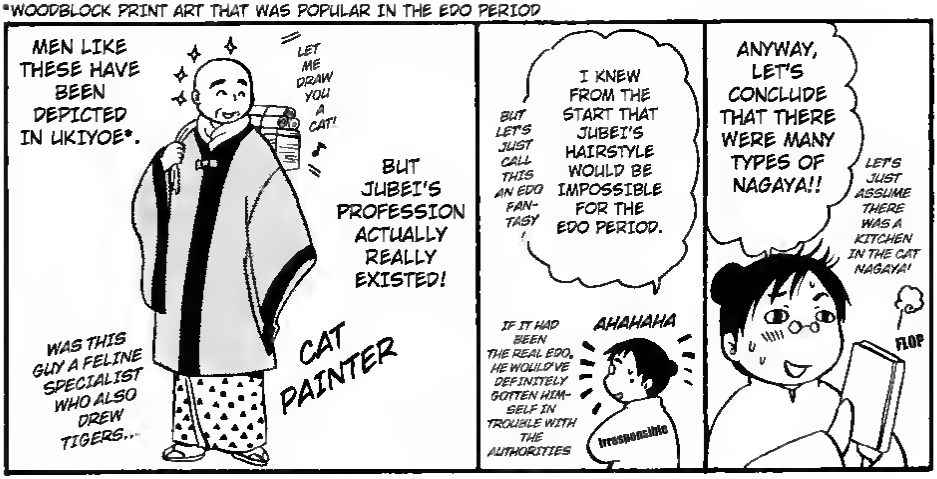
GOOD AT CLASSIC GRAMMAR BACK IN SCHOOL

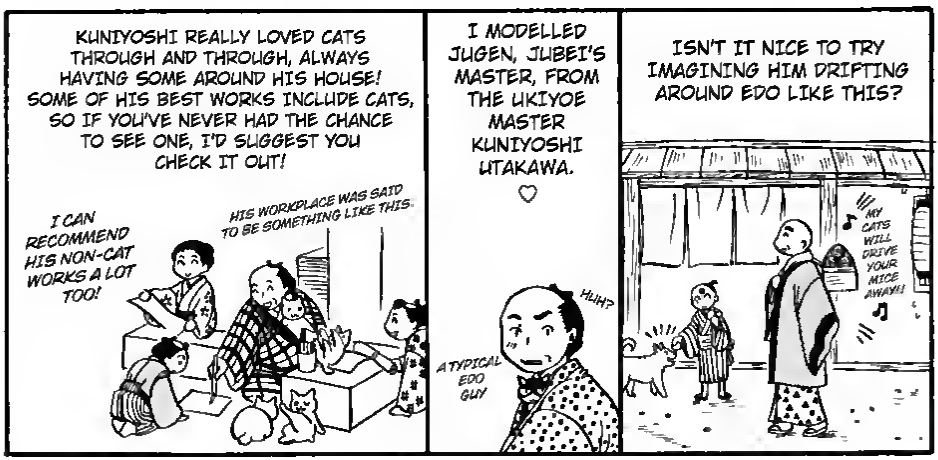
HEY, HOW DO YOU READ THIS?

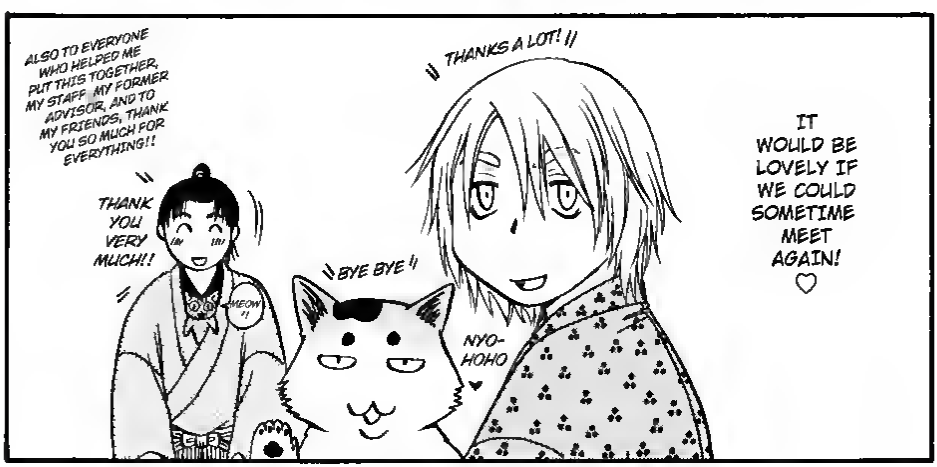
OH, THIS ?

*COMMUNITY HOUSING, AS APPEARED IN CHAPTER 5

*WOODBLOCK PRINT ART THAT WAS POPULAR IN THE EDO PERIOD


MEN LIKE THESE HAVE BEEN DEPICTED IN UKIYOE*.
LET ME DRAW YOU A CAT!
BUT JUBEI'S PROFESSION ACTUALLY REALLY EXISTED!
WAS THIS GUY A FELINE SPECIALIST WHO ALSO DREW TIGERS...
CAT PAINTER
I KNEW FROM THE START THAT JUBEI'S HAIRSTYLE WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE EDO PERIOD.
BUT LET'S JUST CALL THIS AN EDO FANTASY!
AHAHAHA
IF IT HAD BEEN THE REAL EDO, HE WOULD'VE DEFINITELY GOTTEN HIMSELF IN TROUBLE WITH THE AUTHORITIES
irresponsible
ANYWAY, LET'S CONCLUDE THAT THERE WERE MANY TYPES OF NAGAYA!!
LET'S JUST ASSUME THERE WAS A KITCHEN IN THE CAT NAGAYA!
FLOP


KUNIYOSHI REALLY LOVED CATS THROUGH AND THROUGH, ALWAYS HAVING SOME AROUND HIS HOUSE! SOME OF HIS BEST WORKS INCLUDE CATS, SO IF YOU'VE NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO SEE ONE, I'D SUGGEST YOU CHECK IT OUT!
I CAN RECOMMEND HIS NON-CAT WORKS A LOT TOO!
HIS WORKPLACE WAS SAID TO BE SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
I MODELLED JUGEN, JUBEI'S MASTER, FROM THE UKIYOE MASTER KUNIYOSHI UTAKAWA. ♡
HUH?
A TYPICAL EDO GUY
ISN'T IT NICE TO TRY IMAGINING HIM DRIFTING AROUND EDO LIKE THIS?
MY CATS WILL DRIVE YOUR MICE AWAY!!


ALSO TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED ME PUT THIS TOGETHER, MY STAFF, MY FORMER ADVISOR, AND TO MY FRIENDS, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERYTHING!!
THANKS A LOT!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!
MEOW
BYE BYE
NYO-HOHO
IT WOULD BE LOVELY IF WE COULD SOMETIME MEET AGAIN! ♡

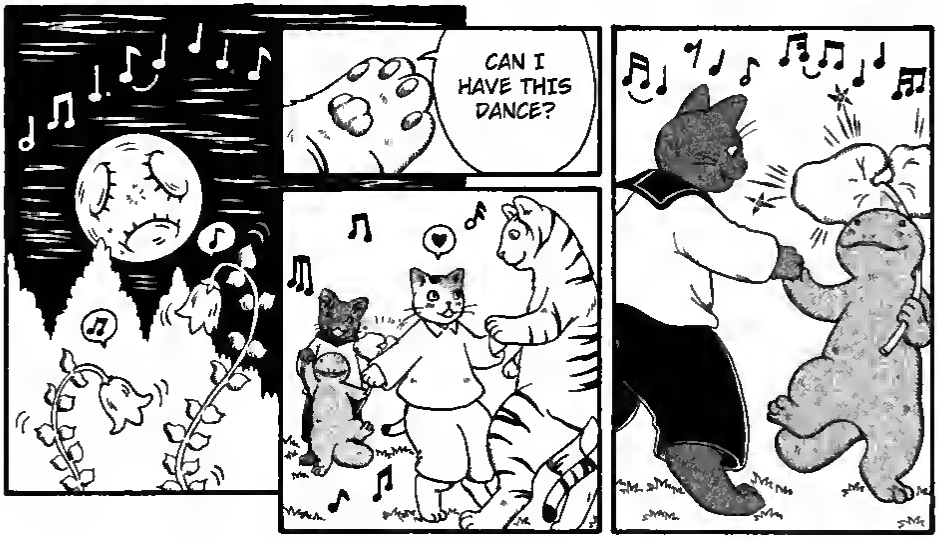
THE END

Cats Moon
IN THIS WORLD, THERE ARE MANY OTHER CREATURES APART FROM US.
THIS IS CAT-TOWN, THE PLACE WHERE WE'VE ALWAYS LIVED.
THERE'S A BEAUTIFUL MOON TONIGHT, SO MAYBE HE WILL!
I WONDER IF HE'LL COME TONIGHT.
HEY, MIRUMARU,
POIT
ぶかっ
ぽちゃ
SPLASH
PANT
PANT
UH
ん

MR SALAMANDER LIVES IN THE WATER, BUT WHEN HE HOLDS A MAGIC LEAF, HE CAN ALSO WALK ON THE LAND. LIKE THAT, HE SOMETIMES COMES ALONG TO MEET US.
Magic Leaf SHOP
x1
MR SALAMAN-DER !!
BOW ペコリ
IT'S BEEN A WHILE !!
EVERYONE IN THE FOREST SEEMS TO BE IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD TODAY!
OH, HELLO!!
RUSTLE カサ
RUSTLE カサ
IT'S SO BRIMMING WITH LIFE TONIGHT!
IT'S AS IF EVERYONE IS MAKING MERRY, IN THE SEAS, THE RIVERS AND THE FORST!
ズシン SHUD
?
ズシン SHUD
CHUCKLE クス
クス CHUCKLE
WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MOON TONIGHT !

THE FAUNS !!
THUD
ドゥ
ドスン
AHAHA
アッハッハッ
ドスン
THUD
WATCH OUT THAT YOU DON'T GET STEPPED ON, LITTLE ONES.
THANK YOU, BACCHUS !!
LET'S EAT !!
LET'S SING !!
LET'S DRINK !!
IT'S A PARTY! IT'S A FEAST!!
ヨッホイ
YO-HO!!
ヨッホイ
YO-HO!!
OH!
DOESN'T IT FEEL GOOD TO DANCE?
ヨッホイ
YO-HO!!
CLACK
EVERYONE FROM TOWN IS HERE!
AND OVER THERE IS OUR CLASS TEACHER !
DON'T JUST EAT, HAVE A DANCE!!
HEY, GINTA !!
DAD...

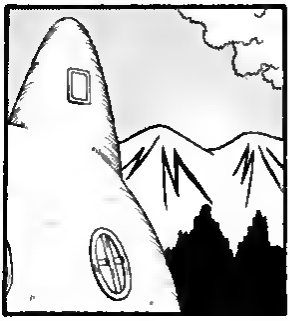
HEY, GIN-TA !!
HEY, MIRU-MARU !!


CAN I HAVE THIS DANCE?

EVERYONE KEPT ON DANCING ROUND AND ROUND, UNTIL THE MOON HID BEHIND THE HORIZON.

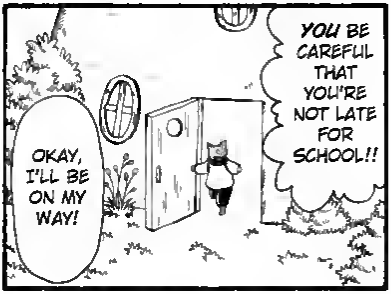
WHAT?? I'M STILL YOUNG, YOU KNOW!!
YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT YOUR AGE, DAD. YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL.

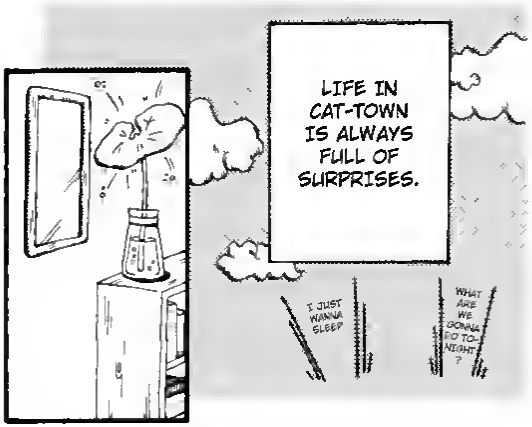
OW OW OW...

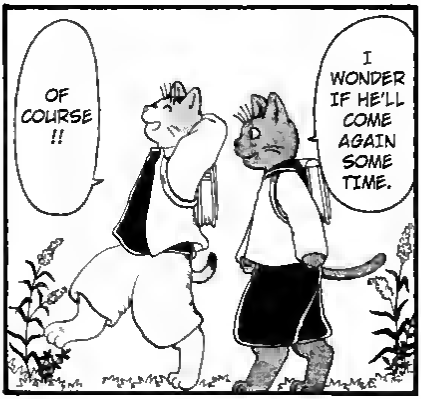


I'M STILL A LITTLE SLEEPY ...
LAST NIGHT WAS SO MUCH FUN!!

GOOD MOR-NING !!


OKAY, I'LL BE ON MY WAY!
YOU BE CAREFUL THAT YOU'RE NOT LATE FOR SCHOOL!!


LIFE IN CAT-TOWN IS ALWAYS FULL OF SURPRISES.
I JUST WANNA SLEEP
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO TONIGHT ?


OF COURSE !!
I WONDER IF HE'LL COME AGAIN SOME TIME.

THE END